



MENTAL HYGIENE

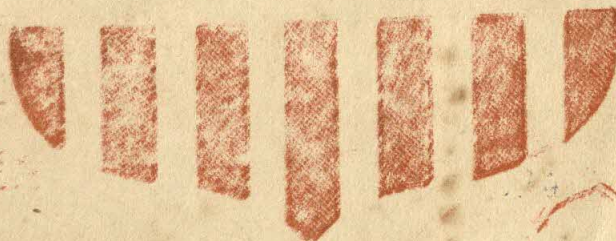
FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



MENTAL HYGIENE
FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS



How many children will come close to a realization of their potential? Which of these will be committed to an institution for mental illness? Are any of these now in need of special help?

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MENTAL HYGIENE FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

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MENTAL HYGIENE FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

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To EVELYN M. BERNARD



PREFACE

THIS VOLUME is an outgrowth of fifteen years of experience in teaching courses relating mental hygiene to education. During this time it was difficult to find in a single volume an approach to the problems, such as these repeatedly posed by teachers and prospective teachers: Why can't we discuss normal children instead of placing so much stress on the occasional marked deviate? This discussion of clinical practices is all very good but my school does not have a clinic—what can we do without a clinic? We are told that we should be happy, confident, cheerful, etc., but why don't you show how one can be more healthy mentally and still be a teacher? Why blame us for poor teacher mental health—why not deal with administrators who are poor mental health influences? How can we give training in basic skills and still devote time to wholesome personality development?

These recurring questions have set the pattern for the book. Specifically, an attempt has been made to (1) avoid too frequent reference to the abnormal child (we are able to think of physical health in terms which include, but go beyond consideration for the diseased); (2) avoid discussion of clinics and formal guidance services (which characterize too few schools) and stress mental hygiene in the classroom; (3) suggest broad patterns and goals of healthy adult living that will lead teachers to come closer to the *dynamic* goal of mental health; (4) indicate that teachers are not *solely* responsible for pupil mental health and should not set impossible idealistic goals of mental health for all their pupils.

Progress toward these goals must be an outcome of replacing the good with the better. Improvement in educational practices is based on willingness to try theoretically sound methods in spite of beliefs that present techniques are efficacious. But such experimentation should be based on a consistent point of view—there should be a frame of reference. The outlining of such a frame of reference is the task that the writer has undertaken. There is no claim that this volume can, does, or should solve all classroom problems. But there is a conviction that *approaches to a solution* can be made. The book is designed to encourage teachers to experi-

ment and "tinker" with even those techniques that seem to be getting good results.

Mental hygiene is a point of view. It is a frame of reference. It is a way of living for the teacher and his pupils. It is a way of teaching for the teacher and a way of learning for *both* the pupil and the teacher. It is a way of looking at problems so that each individual is encouraged to develop as closely as possible to the maximum of his potentiality. This orientation, very simply stated, is that educational practices should be so devised that the fundamental needs and desires of all individuals are met as adequately as they can be—and met in such a manner that conflicts between needs are minimized.

In recent years the ramifications of mental hygiene have spread from concern for the mentally ill to government, medicine, nursing, family relationships, child rearing, social relationships, and education. This study is concerned with one aspect of the relationship of mental hygiene to education, *i.e.*, classroom implications. There are many books which deal with mental hygiene as a tool in the educational clinic and counseling services. Some are concerned with guidance as an approach to better mental health. The primary concern of this book is to deal with mental hygiene in such a way as to make it a technique, a point of view, that is available to *every* teacher. The theories and practices outlined are those that the teacher in a one-room school, as well as the teacher in a large metropolitan center, can use with profit to himself and his pupils.

The work is divided into four sections. The first part deals with the meaning, need for, and implications of mental hygiene. This part considers the fundamental needs of human beings in general. Needs that are particularly insistent in the elementary years and needs that are dominant in the secondary-school years are then brought into the focus of general human needs. Maladjustment as evidence of the denial of needs is discussed in this part. The second part deals with the importance of the teachers, his methods and his personality, as well as his thorough and sympathetic understanding of children. The relationship of mental hygiene to constructive school discipline and self-discipline is discussed. The section discusses some long-used school practices which the teachers might well view with suspicion. Representative problems that are encountered in the school because of the denial of needs, together with some suggestions for viewing these problems with proper perspective, conclude this section. The third part offers many specific, and sometimes novel, suggestions for the improvement of school practice that is directed to the satisfaction of needs. Separate chapters are devoted to the use of art in various forms, to literature and writing, and to play and drama, as techniques for understanding children and also as avenues for expression and personal fulfillment. It is emphasized that the classroom teacher can use

any or all of these approaches if he has only the willingness to experiment. They are not techniques reserved exclusively for use by experts. The fourth and final part deals with what is very probably the most important theme of all; namely, the mental health of the teacher as a person, as a private individual—quite apart from his function as a teacher. It is not that the teaching aspect is considered unimportant—that *is* a significant part of the problem—but the chances of a teacher's being of maximum benefit to the mental health of pupils are very small unless, as a private person, he maintains his own mental health at a high level. Therefore, some suggestions are given which may serve to make the teacher's life and work more enjoyable.

The writer has spent many profitable hours in the classrooms of teachers who have put suggestions for improving mental health conditions into effect. The observations made and the evaluation placed on the workability of mental hygiene (by the teachers) have become an integral part of this presentation. It is hoped that many of the readers of this book will find their skepticism as to the advisability or utility of the suggestions turned into a feeling of gratification similar to that of other teachers who also originally had doubt as to the value of many of the suggestions. Many of the students who have studied these approaches have said that their study of mental hygiene has been their most profitable professional experience. Since many such remarks were made after the final grade had been given, it is felt that they were sincere and not offered as servile flattery.

It is certain that the last word has not been said regarding the application of the mental hygiene viewpoint to classroom practice. In fact, we are only at the beginning of applying psychodrama, creative writing, and art experience to the building of better lives for pupils. If this presentation stimulates teachers to read further and to experiment, it will have served a worth-while purpose. The discussion of democratic procedures is merely one of many pleas for such activity. The treatment herein is intended only as another stimulus to effort in an already clearly charted direction. Similarly, the discussion of constructive discipline is merely a reiteration of what has been effectively said in other professional publications. However, there is a synthesis of old as well as new ideas that can help teachers to replace the good with the better. Teachers will find that a sincere effort to bring about improvement will not only encourage and help the pupils toward a more complete and well-rounded development but also add much enjoyment to the life of teaching.

Harold W. Bernard

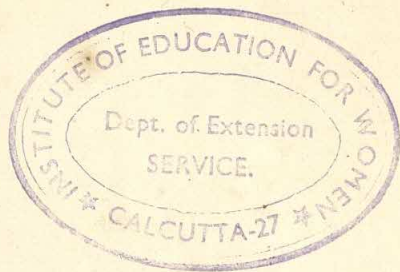
*Portland, Ore.
July, 1952*

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Harold W. Bernard



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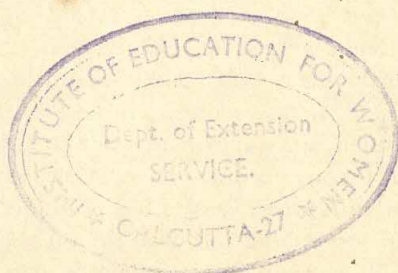
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PART ONE

BASIC CONSIDERATIONS



I

THE NEED FOR THE MENTAL HYGIENE VIEWPOINT

THE CLASSROOM teachers of the country have a major role in developing the greatest resources of our nation. At a time when people are faced with momentous problems and must keep pace with ever more rapid change, teaching becomes increasingly complex and ever more rewarding. Of the many challenges hurled at teachers, none transcends that of making the most of our rich human assets—of keeping children and youth mentally, physically, and spiritually sound. This is the challenge and the opportunity offered by the mental hygiene viewpoint. During childhood and youth the basic patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior are being established; and teachers are the ones who can do most toward forming the foundations for adult happiness and effectiveness. Admittedly, parents have their influence, but they do not have the same opportunity as teachers to take advantage of new discoveries and theories. Probably, those who are most able to facilitate a more adequate adjustment to the problems of living fully and effectively are the classroom teachers.

(Mankind *can* be taught to live with the problems of complexity and speed initiated by conditions of contemporary living.) Scientifically and empirically derived knowledge is available today which would greatly facilitate more harmonious living. More refined and intimate knowledge is continually being realized. The big obstacle is the problem of putting proved principles into actual operation. There is no use in asking who is primarily responsible. Parents, of course, since they control children during the most impressionable years, are in the most strategic position; but too frequently they do not have, or have not had, access to the knowledge which could be used effectively. Social workers, statesmen, community leaders, church workers, and the ordinary citizen have a part to play; but often they, too, have not become acquainted with the entire problem. There is a powerful group of men and women who have had an opportunity to study the nature of individual growth, who have become acquainted with the techniques for putting across ideas, who deal

with people while they are still very much in the process of becoming. This is the group of the classroom teachers, and they are in a strategic position to teach better ways of living.

(Classroom teachers might well take the initiative in putting into active operation the way of life which can justly be called mental health. Someone must stop "passing the buck" and act on the assumption that the teaching of mental health must begin somewhere. We cannot wait for psychiatrists and psychologists to solve all the problems for us. Teachers can afford to become acquainted with the fundamental principles of mental health and begin to put them into practice. They can afford it because to do so will result in a greater personal satisfaction and also in a greater service to a rapidly changing civilization.) The question why something should be done is relatively easy to answer. The major part of this book will deal with the problem of *how* teachers can help more effectively in building for mental health.)

Governmental Recognition of the Problem. A significant step toward the achievement of better mental health for the nation as a whole was taken in the passage of the National Mental Health Act in July, 1946. This act formally recognized that mental health is a problem of great significance. The Act does three significant things: (1) It gives recognition to the fact that mental hygiene means more than care for those already mentally ill, (2) it implies that mental illness is preventable, and (3) it makes funds available for the study and dissemination of knowledge. Oscar R. Ewing, Federal Security Administrator, states the significance of the Act as follows:

When the National Mental Health Act was passed in 1946, the United States Government accepted a major responsibility for combatting mental illness in the Nation. It is traditional in the United States for States to care for severe cases of mental illness. But this legislation takes a significant step forward by providing Federal support for development of preventive mental health services in the States and communities, for research and for training of professional personnel. The goal of this program is to give every American the opportunity to achieve good mental health—to help him to live in peace with himself, his neighbors and the world.¹

The Act provides that a National Advisory Mental Health Council, composed of prominent medical and scientific authorities who are versed in the field of mental hygiene, assist the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service in carrying out the provisions of the Act. The provisions are threefold: (1) training of mental health personnel, (2) research di-

¹ The National Mental Health Program: Federal Security Agency, Public Health Service, Mental Health Series, No. 4, June, 1948, Foreword. By permission of Public Health Service, National Institute of Mental Health.

rected toward the problems of mental illness, and (3) development by the states of preventive mental health programs in the community.² The functions of the program are put into action by making grants to institutions for improving their facilities and for supplying training stipends to selected graduate students. There is no intent to take over the functions of states in caring for the mentally ill but to help the states by removing stigma from mental illness and to replace superstition with scientific facts about the causes and prevention of mental illness.

Teachers may find a clue to their responsibility for mental health in the concluding words of the brochure which describes the Act, "But the ultimate development of sound mental health programs depends on the local men and women who are closely in touch with the resources and needs of their community and who are deeply concerned with bringing optimum mental health to all their neighbors."³

The Federal government, by virtue of the Act, accepts a part of the responsibility for mental health in a manner similar to programs for cancer, tuberculosis, and venereal diseases. The implications for the layman are somewhat the same. Just as there remains much to be done for tuberculosis and venereal disease by residents of local communities, so in the field of mental hygiene there will remain much to be done locally. If the mental hygiene movement experiences the success that has attended the work for improving the tuberculosis and venereal disease situation, it will be because people have been awakened to the importance of the problem and have been led to take a similar active part in the program. (Just as teachers have played a dominant role in spreading knowledge about and improving attitudes toward the problem of physical health, they must take a leading part in awakening people to the nature, need, and importance of mental health.) It is, in fact, probable that the significance of the teacher's part can be even greater in working out the problem of mental health than it has been, and is, in serving physical health. Some mental health problems are caused by school situations. Others are aggravated by school conditions. Teachers, by direct effort, can remove some of the causes and aggravating factors of mental illness and therefore they need not rely entirely on the effectiveness of their verbal instruction, as was largely the case in the successful attack of the physical health problems.) The millennium has not been reached; but this Act may well initiate the slow growth, with which educators are familiar, that will result in greatly improved mental health.

Educators Recognize the Problem of Mental Health. Individual educators have recognized the problem presented by the prevalence of men-

² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 7. By permission of Public Health Service, National Institute of Mental Health.

tal ill-health, and frequent references to its importance are made in books dealing with the philosophy, psychology, and methods of teaching. A number of books deal exclusively with the techniques of improving mental hygiene conditions in the classroom. The growing recognition of the significance of mental health as a problem for educators has reached a national scale. Willard E. Givens, in the preface of the 1948 annual report of the National Education Association of the United States, says: "The report emphasizes the practical nature of our modern education and its adaptation to the needs of youth in a changing world where knowledge is always expanding." Later, he makes the following statement:

The American people are not bringing to bear the full effect of scientific knowledge and effort upon what has been described as the nation's number one health problem, the problem of mental health. It is estimated that one out of every twenty children in our schools today is destined to spend some time in a mental hospital. The cure of mental ills must be left largely to the specialist. Prevention depends upon diagnosis of early symptoms, in which the teacher can help. The growth of mental health as a positive, robust quality takes place in association with intellectual and emotional development, a function of the school. A third important step toward improving the welfare of all of our children is the provision of a mental health program. Mental hygiene should be introduced more generally into our school studies, and the principles of mental health should be recognized in the organization and administration of the school program, and mental health specialists should be available to those who need treatment.⁴

Recognition of the problem is an important step, but certainly not the only one. It will probably be a long time before enough specialists can be prepared to meet the needs of even one out of twenty students. In the meantime, there is much that can be done immediately by teachers to create a school environment conducive to mental health and to help children who have minor symptoms of maladjustment. In view of the steady call to add more essentials to an already overcrowded curriculum, it may be some time before administrators can add courses of instruction in mental hygiene, even though they recognize mental health as the number one health problem. Administrators have the responsibility of encouraging their teachers to study the principles of mental hygiene and of providing opportunities for the teachers to work with individual students and their problems of mental health.

Recognition of the problem of mental health is also reflected in the introduction of college courses in mental hygiene. An examination of college catalogues indicates that most of the institutions for preparing

⁴ National Education Association of the United States, *Proceedings of the Eighty-seventh Annual Meeting*, Vol. 87, Washington, D.C.: The Association, 1949, pp. 321 and 325. By permission of the National Education Association.

teachers have courses in mental hygiene and personal adjustment. In addition, there are mental hygiene emphases in courses in educational psychology, child development, and psychology of adjustment, and in the courses dealing with teaching methods. In some states, work in the area of mental hygiene for both teachers and administrators is a requisite for certification.

Another indication of the growing awareness of the problem of mental health in the schools can be noted in the number of articles in professional magazines dealing with the subject. Numerous educational conferences have sections, and sometimes continuing themes, of mental hygiene as a working basis. Many teacher in-service programs revolve around the problem of improving the mental health conditions of the school.

As is true of the National Mental Hygiene Act, these evidences of interest in mental hygiene do not solve the problem. But an encouraging start has been made and opportunities are expanding for the classroom teacher to learn how to exert a more positive influence on improved mental health for the nation at large.

THE EXTENT OF MENTAL ILL-HEALTH

Mental Health a National Problem. Statistics on the extent of mental ill-health reveal something of the seriousness of the problem with which we are faced. The cold statement that one out of every twenty individuals will spend some time in his life in an institution for the mentally ill is heard so frequently that it makes but slight impression. Robert H. Felix, Chief of the Mental Hygiene Division, Public Health Service of the Federal Security Agency, advises against complacency, in the following words:

Certainly with 1 out of 20 of our present generation of school children destined to spend time in a mental hospital, unless present rates of mental illness are curbed, the schools cannot wait for some dimly seen "ideal" time before they launch a large-scale offensive against the greatest disabler of all diseases: mental illness.⁵

When we stop to count pupils in the classroom and wonder which one (in terms of the national average) will be the one to suffer serious mental illness, the statement takes on an aspect of personal gravity. In some cases it may even be possible to predict with some accuracy which one is most likely to be the victim, since the warning symptoms of mental ill-health precede the actual point of breakdown. If only five pupils out of an average group of one hundred encountered in the school were to be affected by mental ill-health, the problem might seem less serious than

⁵ Robert H. Felix, M.D., "The Teacher's Role in Mental Health Defense," *School Life*, Vol. 31 (January, 1949), p. 3.

it really is. But there are many of the other ninety-five who will fail to realize the best of their potentiality, who will find it impossible to be happy, who will suffer from minor disturbances, yet will not be sufficiently maladjusted to be committed to institutions. These, too, should be recognized as a vital part of the problem of mental health. It is estimated that about one out of thirteen pupils is in need of special help and consideration.

"Mental illness is a bigger problem than cancer, tuberculosis, and infantile paralysis combined. It strikes one in five families and one in thirteen people."⁶ During World War II it was found necessary to reject for military service, because of mental and emotional instability, 38 per cent of those examined—and this, supposedly, from that group which we consider to be in the "prime of life." More than one marriage out of four ends in divorce; this, too, is a symptom of lack of ability to adjust. Increasingly the excessive use of alcohol is being recognized to be more than an unfortunate habit; it is a symptom of inability to face the exigencies of life and an attempt to escape routine pressures. In 1940 there were 2,400,000 excessive drinkers in the United States and 600,000 chronic alcoholics. This number of excessive drinkers is almost one-eighth as large as the total number of young people enrolled in elementary schools (19,325,000) during the same year. This datum constitutes another evidence of the extent of mental illness.

(Mental Health as a Social and School Problem. If to the statistical indications of the need for the mental hygiene viewpoint we add the everyday symptoms of mental illness, the situation becomes even more striking. These indications cover a wide variety of phenomena. They include children in the home who are excessively jealous of the status, or imagined status, of their siblings. They include parents who are working under the conviction that their children are restricting their personal liberty unduly. Pupils who hate school and are truants on every possible occasion can be added to the category of the mentally ill. Pupils who have good mental ability but who not only fail to work up to their capacity but actually fail to achieve minimum standards are revealing symptoms of mental ill-health. Youngsters who have not learned techniques for getting along harmoniously with their peers are failing to acquire the happiness which gives evidence of sound mental health. Adults who are unhappy under the pressures of their occupational responsibilities are evidencing a lack of adjustment to the realities of life. The numerous persons who seek medical attention for ailments for which doctors can find no organic cause are, in large proportion, the victims of mental illness.) The listing

⁶ William B. Terhune, M.D. (ed.), *Living Wisely and Well*, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1949, p. 67. By permission of the editor.

could go on and on. It is enough to say that manifestations of jealousy, hate, suspicion, surliness, excessive drinking, drug addiction, transiency in employment, quarrelsomeness, easily giving vent to anger, blaming others, moodiness, and unhappiness are also indications of the seriousness of the problem of mental health. It is with good reason and considerable insight that the designers of the Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization assert in the Preamble (italics not in original):

The Governments of the States parties to this Constitution, on behalf of their peoples, declare that *since wars begin in the minds of men it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed*; that ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause throughout the history of mankind of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war.

The above quotation shows that statistical presentation of the extent of mental illness does nothing more than to tell a part of the story.

Still another picture of the seriousness of the problem of mental ill-health can be obtained by examining in detail the life situation of one individual who has properly been termed "mentally ill." This individual may be living a lonesome and fearful life in the presence of bickering parents. He has learned only slowly, if at all, the basic elements of social adjustment; he is rejected by the children at school as being a crybaby or a poor sport and is jeeringly forbidden to partake in group activities. His worry over lack of acceptance causes his mind to wander in school and the teacher reprimands him for being inattentive. A teacher conference with his parents may do nothing more than provide the parents with an opportunity to air their mutual difficulties before a third party, resulting in no advantage to the child. The child then decides to get away from school and home by truancy and running away—only to be seized by police authorities. Then because the child had "done nothing," he decides that next time they get him he will at least have had the satisfaction of having "done something." It is not easy to visualize this young person in jail, planning "jobs," taking drugs, getting some cash at the end of a gun; but we know that these things do take place. Behind the newspaper headlines about crime and violence are experiences of individual, personal, poignant sorrow, and hate, frustration, and tragedy.

The Future of Mental Health. There are some alarmists who would have us believe that the incidence of mental breakdown is increasing, that the number of people in mental hospitals is growing faster than is warranted in terms of the increase in population. While the figures on commitments are not to be questioned—they do indicate an increase—there is no real reason to believe that mental illness is affecting a larger proportion

of the population than it formerly did. Several reasons for rejecting a pessimistic view of growing mental illness are these: (1) There is an increasing recognition of the symptoms that indicate mental illness, therefore more people are identified as maladjusted. (2) The changing concept of mental illness has contributed to a lack of accuracy in interpreting statistics. (3) There are constantly growing facilities for taking care of the mentally ill, so that one case may remain a "statistic" for a longer period of time now than previously.

However, one very sound reason why the possibility of an increasing incidence of mental illness should be considered has to do with the fact that more people are living to advanced ages now than at the turn of the century. The older a person becomes, the greater is the probability that he will suffer from mental breakdown. This is shown in the following table of hospital admissions for the Warren State Hospital of Pennsylvania, which may be considered representative of the United States as a whole.

<i>Age group</i>	<i>First admission rate per 100,000 of general population *</i>
15-19	42
20-29	79
30-39	102
40-49	108
50-59	122
60-69	146
70 and over	231

* Nelson A. Johnson, "The Growing Problem of Old-age Psychoses," *Mental Hygiene*, Vol. 30 (July, 1946), p. 436. By permission of the publisher.

Not only are older people apparently more prone to mental breakdown than are those in the younger age brackets, but recent years show that the rate of breakdown for the older people is increasing.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Old-age admissions *</i>
1940	113
1941	136
1942	153
1943	156
1944	144

* Nelson A. Johnson, "The Growing Problem of Old-age Psychoses," *Mental Hygiene*, Vol. 30 (July, 1946), p. 442. By permission of the publisher.

C. Landis and James D. Page show graphically that from 1910 to 1936 the rate of admission to mental hospitals by age groups of ten years (*e.g.*, 10-19, 20-29, etc.) has remained at approximately the same level up to age 59. During this period, admissions for the 60-69 group increased from about 115 per 100,000 to about 200; and from about 180 to over 400 per 100,000 of the general population for the age group of 70 and over.⁷

When the fact that more people are living to advanced ages is added to the greater susceptibility of older people to mental disorder, the implications for mental hygiene must be seriously considered. In 1900, older people constituted only a very small proportion of the population—about 4.1 per cent living to the age of 65 years or over. In 1940, the percentage had grown to 7.2 per cent of the population; and it is estimated that by 1980 about 11 per cent of the population will be living to the age of 65 or over.

It may very well be that the cause of the increase in commitments for the mentally ill in general and for old people in particular is merely that the life span has increased so considerably. That is, if more people had lived to advanced ages in 1900, there would have been as much mental illness as there is today. Prolonging life may give a greater chance for incipient mental ill-health to become manifested. It may be that the lives of people who were constitutionally predisposed to mental disease have been saved by modern medicine, only to have the weakness become apparent in later years. Science, while saving the body, has not learned to cope with the problem of saving the mind.

On the other hand, there is the possibility that economic, cultural, and technological pressures have become greater and that therefore more people break under the strain. Two world wars, many minor wars, and the threat of war may be more than man can stand. Economic pressures attendant upon increasing population and the closing of physical frontiers impose constant worries on individuals. It may even be that the shortening of the working week, without man's having learned to use leisure time constructively, is a burden. In 1900, the working week averaged 58 hours; in 1940, the 40-hour work week prevailed; and it is estimated that, by 1980, at the present rate of change, the 30-hour work week will prevail. Add to this the fact that compulsory retirement at the age of sixty-five years is becoming general, and it may be harder to understand the value, from the viewpoint of productivity and purposefulness, of longer life for man.

The sound view of aging is to combine the viewpoint of environment with the factors of organic change. There is no doubt that organic fac-

⁷ Carney Landis and James D. Page, *Modern Society and Mental Disease*, New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1938, p. 139.

tors have much to do with the breakdown of older people. The process of physical degeneration works toward reducing the size of organs, changing intercellular and supporting tissue, altering blood vessels and circulation. Healing after injury and disease is less rapid than in the earlier years. But even if the pervasiveness of organic factors is admitted, the role of mental hygiene is significant. The way the older person thinks about his organic decline will influence his effectiveness. His willingness to accept an altered plan of life should be an outcome of changed physical status; besides, his attitude will affect the extent and speed of physical changes. Therefore, even considering organic alteration, the problem of aging is still largely a problem of mental hygiene.

It makes no difference which of these views we take as to the cause of mental ill-health in old age; in all of them there are certain questions for the classroom teacher to consider. Ideally, provision against the ills of old age should begin in the early years of life. If teachers can help their pupils establish the habits and outlook that are the goals of mental hygiene, they will be helping to prepare them for the uncertainties of the later years. The best defense against maladjustment is to identify symptoms of mental ill-health at an early stage and to treat individuals who give evidence of such symptoms. This means that the classroom teacher who becomes aware of minor symptoms and is able to help the pupils resolve some of their conflicts is taking an important part in the conservation of the nation's human resources, by preparing the way for citizens to live a productive life over a long span of years. The earlier the symptoms of mental disturbance can be identified and treated, the greater is the chance for effective mental health practices. The field of mental hygiene is offering evidence that truly the future of our welfare lies in the hands of teachers.

THE MEANING OF MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

[The Concept of Mental Health. Defining the term *mental health* would be about as difficult as defining democracy. But the fact that democracy defies definition does not preclude having convictions about its meaning. As a matter of fact, when people discuss the meaning of the term they are rather closely agreed upon many of its basic aspects. They have, in short, arrived at a workable concept of the meaning of democracy. So, too, while definitions of mental health will differ, the fundamental aspects are seen to be in close agreement, in spite of variations in the wording. This can be seen in the quoted definitions which follow.

Mental health may be defined as the adjustment of individuals to themselves and the world at large with a maximum of effectiveness, satisfactions, cheerfulness, and socially considerate behavior, and the ability of facing and

accepting the realities of life.] The highest degree of mental health might, therefore, be described as that which permits an individual to realize the greatest success which his capabilities will permit, with a maximum of satisfaction to himself and the social order, and a minimum of friction and tension. This implies a stage of such well-being that the individual is not conscious of unsatisfied tensions; does not show socially inadequate or objectionable behavior and maintains himself intellectually and emotionally in any environment under any circumstances.⁸

We may define mental health as the ability to adjust satisfactorily to the various strains we meet in life and mental hygiene as the means we take to assure this adjustment.⁹

Just what a "mature, healthy person" is, is extremely difficult to define; indeed a clear-cut and complete definition is impossible at this time. Suffice it to say that the mature, healthy person is one who is able to live at relative peace with himself and with his neighbors; who has the capacity to successfully raise healthy children; and who, when these basic functions are accomplished, still has energy enough left over to make some further contribution to the society in which he lives.¹⁰

[The foregoing definitions give some idea of the underlying concept of mental health. In the first place, it is not a static condition. Rather, it involves a process of continuous adjustment. Mental health is an ability to adjust to the present situation and likelihood that the individual will adjust to forthcoming situations. In each of the definitions this "ability" or "capacity" for adjustment is mentioned. In the second place, mental health is more than mental. It involves physical, mental, and emotional phases of adjustive behavior. It involves habits of work and attitudes toward situations and problems. Hence, it might be said that mental health is a point of view one takes when viewing all phases of living. In the third place, the concept of mental health involves a social phase. Thus, the definition includes such phrases as "socially considerate behavior," "satisfaction to the social order," "raise healthy children," and "contributions to society."

[It is apparent that perfect mental health is not a condition to be easily achieved. Rather, it is a goal for living. In fact, we can say that mental health is a progressive goal. It is a challenge to continued personal and social development. The ongoing nature of mental health must be fully

⁸ White House Conference, *Preliminary Reports*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1930, p. 465. By permission of the publisher.

⁹ Norma E. Cutts and Nicholas Moseley, *Practical School Discipline and Mental Hygiene*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941, p. 4. By permission of the publisher.

¹⁰ By permission from *Mental Hygiene in Public Health* by Paul V. Lemkau, 1949, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., p. 66

realized or we may find ourselves working toward a strictly limited goal, and this, when reached, might lead to a state of repose or satisfaction that would hamper future adjustment. Actually, perfect mental health is not a complete and definite condition that can be fully achieved; it is something toward which to work, in spite of the knowledge that perfection will probably never be reached.)

Mental health for teachers is a state in which they are effective in their work, take satisfaction and pride in the activities they pursue, manifest cheer in the performance of their duties, and are humanely considerate of their pupils and their professional coworkers. This is a large order—perhaps too large an order—but the ongoing nature of mental health holds a saving feature. Working toward improvement and attaining some betterment is evidence of mental health in its dynamic concept.

(Mental health in the classroom) can be emphasized in similar terms. It involves students who are effective, or successful, in the activities of the classroom.) The mentally healthy student is one who gains satisfaction from the achievements he is experiencing, and who has reason for doing so. Because he is effective and has satisfactions, he is cheerful about his work and his associations. And finally, the mentally healthy student is one who works for and with others. He is not a lonesome, or "lone-wolf," individual; rather, he takes pride in knowing how to act cooperatively. And by virtue of these characteristics, he is forming the habits and attitudes that will make his adjustment in future situations easier and will create in him a confidence that problems should be and can be aggressively attacked.)

The Concept of Mental Hygiene. (Mental hygiene) can be defined more easily than mental health, because it is simply the means by which the process of mental health is realized.) Beyond this very general statement the explanation becomes more difficult, because (mental hygiene is a way of life and, so, involves all that influences what one feels, says, and does. In the classroom, it involves the plans, the objectives, the techniques, the materials, the physical conditions, and the teacher himself, as they shape the classroom atmosphere as a whole.)

Knowledge of mental mechanisms and useful techniques of adjusting can be rather easily learned and should be universally practiced. Mental hygiene teaching begins in the home; the application of its principles should be continued throughout life. Unfortunately our schools and colleges are only beginning to teach these principles and techniques, but it is to be hoped that in the near future mental hygiene will be more generally included as part of the regular curriculum.¹¹

¹¹ William B. Terhune (ed.), *Living Wisely and Well*, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1949, p. 14. By permission of the editor.

The inclusiveness of the meaning of mental hygiene is seen in the definition given by L. F. Shaffer:

Just as physical hygiene is concerned with the health of those who are well as much as with those who are sick, so mental hygiene also has implications for all persons. In the broadest sense, the aim of mental hygiene is to assist every individual in the attainment of a fuller, happier, more harmonious and more effective existence.¹²

The implications of the concept of mental hygiene for teachers are well summarized by W. Carson Ryan:

Mental hygiene has to do primarily with the development of more wholesome human relationships. It means applying to everyday living what has been learned with regard to the behavior of human beings. On the negative side, it has been concerned with more humane and intelligent care and treatment of the mentally ill. Positively, it has meant the early discovery of mental and emotional difficulties, the prevention of as much threatened serious illness and disorder as possible, and the provision of healthful living for the greatest conceivable number of individuals as members of a modern society. For teachers, social workers, and others whose daily activities have to do with children, youth, and other human beings, mental hygiene involves not only a better understanding of human growth and development with respect to those with whom they work, but also an understanding of the worker's own personality and his own relationship to his family, associates, school, and community.¹³

The wide ramifications of mental hygiene can be seen from an examination of the quoted definitions. Facile and wholesome human relationships take first place. The significance of the stimulating circumstances which lead to growth are emphasized. Intellectual efficiency within a personality that is emotionally stable is an outstanding objective. Mental hygiene involves an understanding of oneself and of those with whom one comes in contact, either directly or indirectly. It is not only a practical, day-by-day application of common sense and scientific knowledge, but it involves, as well, an attitude or a way of looking at life. A facet of mental hygiene not stated directly but clearly implied in the quoted statements has to do with physical health. Inasmuch as mind and body are but aspects of the total organism under different names, the condition of one's physical health has an intimate bearing on his mental health. Mental hygiene must, therefore, involve applying knowledge with regard to keeping in as good health as possible and knowing what to do in the event of illness.

¹² L. F. Shaffer, *The Psychology of Adjustment*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936, p. 435. By permission of the publisher.

¹³ W. Carson Ryan in C. E. Skinner (ed.), *Elementary Educational Psychology*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1945, p. 378. By permission of the publisher.

(Broadly speaking, the mental hygiene program in the school should do two things: (1) It should seek to remove as many as possible of the conditions which hamper the realization of mental health and should seek to diminish the impact of those hindrances which cannot be removed. (2) The mental hygiene program should seek, as far as possible in terms of the degree of maturity of the pupil, to develop attitudes toward problems that will encourage a sensible attack upon those problems; and it should seek to develop tension-tolerance for the unpleasant aspects of life which, at least temporarily, cannot be changed. It should, in brief, aim at the highest degree of self-realization for each child in all areas of his school experience.]

The Prospects of Mental Health. The fact that there is hope for achieving better mental health is recognized by the emphasis placed on the preventive aspect of the program. Many speakers and writers have dwelt upon the idea that teachers who are convinced of the value of mental hygiene and who know something of its theory and techniques are actually the hope of the nation for a still better life than we now enjoy.

Individual school systems in which mental hygiene has been given special emphasis report gratifying results. These results are found in an improved atmosphere in the school as a whole and also in the improved behavior of individual pupils. Communities that have placed attention on those aspects of living which are given special importance in the concept of mental hygiene have reduced juvenile delinquency, heightened community morale, and provided more stimulating living for all.

A hopeful view of the prospects of mental health, however, can find justification which goes beyond faith and general impressions. W. Carson Ryan reports that a study of Locust Point, a section of Baltimore, Maryland, indicates that even the "direst prophecies of dependability and instability may be brought to naught" by an effectively planned and executed program of mental hygiene. He presents objective evidence that an educational program planned to fit the needs of people who are potentially poor through inheritance and through cultural conditions may serve to make them dependable citizens. A significant conclusion of this study confirms the belief that teachers have a major role in the achievement of mental health. "But it is to the teachers—specially selected for their sympathetic and understanding efforts with individual children—that Dr. Fairbank [director of the follow-up study] gives the largest share of the credit to turning the inherent liabilities of the Locust Point child population so largely into assets for the community."¹⁴

¹⁴ W. Carson Ryan, *Mental Health through Education*, Washington, D.C.: Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1938, p. 20. By permission of the publisher. The complete report, pages 16–20, is recommended for additional reading.

Other evidences of the fact that mental hygiene works may be seen in a variety of studies. In San Francisco, where 800 atypical children were treated in accordance with their needs, only four of them appeared in juvenile courts. This would be an enviable record if the 800 children had been average children. St. Louis experienced somewhat the same results when, out of 1,969 students in special classes, only 3.3 per cent were committed to correctional institutions. The Los Angeles Institute of Family Relations reported that, out of 10,000 cases of potential divorce, 70 per cent were prevented. This last study is not of direct concern to the school, but it does show that improved understanding can result in better human relationships.

Adequate adjustment is not something innate or instinctive. Each new generation must learn anew the processes of effective living. The most outstanding characteristic of human beings is the high degree of their ability to change or modify their ways. But without the direction and suggestion provided by the experience of previous generations, the actions of the present population would be faltering and groping. It can therefore be said confidently that the mental health of the future is dependent upon those who influence the lives of the young people. The place of greatest importance in this influence, of course, is held by the parents. But a very close second in importance is that occupied by teachers.

The Meaning of Maturity. The dictionary definition of maturity is the "condition of being mature or ripe, having developed fully." Psychological maturity implies, in general, that the individual has reached the state of adulthood; he acts like a grown person. Actually, of course, there are many chronologically mature persons who are immature as far as their emotional responses are concerned. There are some who have reached "legal" age but who have not learned the lessons of responsibility that go along with getting and holding a job; these people are psychologically immature. Thus, we can say of maturity—as has been said about mental health—that it is a process or a way of living, of adjustment, rather than a state or condition. In fact, if the meaning of mental health is restricted to the adult level, it can safely be claimed that one is in good mental health when his actions are manifestations of maturity. An adult is mature when, and only when, he is in good mental health. Thus, the criteria of maturity can also be used as criteria for determining whether or not an individual has good mental health.

Maturity need not be restricted to the adult level. The word can, and does, have reference to children of any age; but the meaning takes on a slightly different point of emphasis. When a child is said to be mature, this is understood to mean that he acts in accordance with his age. A child is immature when his behavior, intelligence, or physical growth is below

what can be expected of children of his same chronological and mental age. A child ten years old who has a mental age of eight years is immature; and on the other hand, a child who is ten and has a mental age of ten is intellectually mature, in spite of the fact that he does not have the mental age of the average adult—that is, he is mature in terms of what should be expected of him at his age. One is likely to be misunderstood if he says, "That is an immature child," meaning that the child does not act like an adult. Most people will take the statement to mean that the child is not acting according to his age. In this book, when reference is made to maturity, it will have the implication indicated—that maturity means being or acting in the way that can properly be expected from anyone of the same chronological age.

Criteria of Maturity. All the criteria of maturity listed below are appropriate for the first definition of maturity; *i.e.*, adulthood, or a fully ripe development. Only the first four, however, can fit the second definition; *i.e.*, conduct appropriate to one's chronological age. Thus, all the criteria in the list can be regarded as long-time goals for growing children and youth; but only the first four can be applied as standards for evaluating children of any age as far as their conduct at the time is concerned.

1. A mature person has an adaptable and resilient mind. This means that one has the ability to make adjustments to changed and changing conditions and to form habits of making such adjustments. It means that he is willing to try again, to bounce back from temporary disappointment. It implies tenaciousness, but not dogged and blind persistence. At the adult level, it refers to a person who can listen to new or opposing ideas and who, when pertinent data are presented, can change his mind. A resilient mind is one which views defeat as temporary, an indication of need for a new mode of attack—not as conclusive evidence that the particular goal being sought should be abandoned; but at the same time, an adaptable mind is one which realizes that some things are at present unable to be changed and are inevitable and that it will be wise here and now to give up the particular goal.

2. A mature person is one who is socially adequate and adaptable. A study of any text on psychology of childhood will reveal that there are certain things that can be expected in terms of social adaptability for children of various ages. By school age, mature children should have learned how to make friends, how to make concessions to the wishes of others, how to work cooperatively, and the like. Adulthood will add little to the list except improved efficiency in those social skills listed, plus the ability to be concerned with people the world over, rather than just those whom one knows personally.

3. One is mature when his emotions are satisfying and under control. This maturity will vary greatly from year to year as true adulthood is

approached; but again, objective studies clearly show what is appropriate. By school age, children should have outgrown negativism and temper tantrums if they are to be called appropriately mature. Upon reaching high-school age, they should show adeptness at covering (and controlling) their anger. Pouting and sulking should have been outgrown by those of high-school age. The mature adult will have no unreasonable fears,¹⁵ will be capable of conducting his social relations without jealousy, and will be proficient in exercising a wide range of the positive, or upbuilding, emotions. At all ages, a mature person should, under normal circumstances, have a greater amount of joy in his life than he has of disappointment and sorrow.

4. A person is mature when his impulses and desires are in harmony with socially approved goals. There are two limitations to this aspect of maturity. In the first place, it depends upon age and experience; but this has also been said of the first three criteria. Obviously, one cannot be expected to adhere to rules, customs, and laws with which he has not become acquainted, but the truly mature person makes it his business to know what the approved goals and methods of conduct are. A second limitation to this criterion is that genuinely mature persons will sometimes come into contact with behaviors which are customary but nonetheless unworthy of acceptance. Local practices of discrimination against Negroes or Jews are pertinent examples. People who disagree with and criticize present practices in behavior and beliefs are valuable to society, in that they provide a stimulus to growth and change. For this reason, for the person who is not just maturing, but is an adult, the statement should read, "A person is mature when his impulses and desires are in harmony with socially approved approaches to problems." That is, he does not seek to change things by revolution or war or just outright disdain, but attempts to change the unjust beliefs and practices through democratic methods of discussion, study, and education.

The next four criteria may only in a limited sense apply to the process of maturing and will ordinarily be found only to a limited degree in the individual who has not gone beyond the stage of adolescence in his maturity.

5. One is mature when he has insight into his own conduct. Recently the author talked with a student teacher who came into the office to tell a sad tale of being misunderstood. Her motives were misunderstood by her supervising teacher, the principal was unfair in her evaluation of the

¹⁵ Such a thing as fearing the loss of one's job in a period of persistent financial depression and business cutbacks may be a reasonable fear. If this be merely a "genuine concern," then we can say that a mature adult should have no fears. This dogmatic statement is based on the idea that fears provide no positive adjustment and consequently should be eliminated.

student teacher's discipline, and the professor of education (the author) had failed to give the background requisite to student teaching. The fact that the other seventeen student teachers were enjoying their experiences was, in this student's view, a mere "happenstance." Her own difficulties were, as far as she could see, simply a matter of having the misfortune to be thrown into contact with unsympathetic persons.

Insight into one's own conduct is not easily attained. Courses in psychology, mental hygiene, and sociology will be a great help. Attitudes of honesty or objectivity are distinct assets. But in some instances the help of a psychiatrist may be needed in order that one may see himself as others see him. By whatever means anyone gains insight into his own conduct, the fact remains that until he does understand his motives, and until he is honest in the evaluation of both his liabilities and his assets, he is not satisfying this particular criterion of maturity.

6. A person is mature when he has reasonable enthusiasm and satisfaction in the day's work. This criterion of maturity strongly implies the all-important element of balance. A middle-of-the-road course must be taken between two extremes. One extreme is to be so completely identified with one's work that social, cultural, spiritual, and physical values are forgotten. This happens to the individual who knows and does nothing but his work. He forgets his family, his friends, and his own all-round development. The other extreme is the attitude of the person who does his work grudgingly and under the constant stress of obligation. His work is regarded as a necessary but unwelcome evil. He bemoans the fact that he has his particular job and fancies that he would be much happier doing something else.

The mature person, in this respect, is one who realizes that in the working life is to be found many of life's deepest satisfactions. He takes pride in doing the best work of which he is capable. He sees his job as an important aspect of the functioning of society and views his role as being significant. He is able to see in his work opportunities for self-development or personality growth and will seek ways of improving his performance. If the job is of an irrevocably routine nature he will see in it the opportunity to develop habits of application and responsibility which can be used on a better job when he outgrows the present one. He will see his work as an integral part of the entire art of living, but not as the *entire* performance. The importance of a balanced view of work is stressed in the words of Erich Fromm, "Productive activity is characterized by the rhythmic change of activity and repose. Productive work, love, and thought are possible only if a person can be, when necessary, quiet and alone with himself." ¹⁶

¹⁶ Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1947, p. 107. By permission of the publisher.

7. A person is mature when a secure foundation of good habits has been acquired in early life. Arbitrarily we shall say that "good" habits are those which facilitate adjustment.¹⁷ This criterion stresses the developmental nature of maturity. Maturity is not something about which one can make a decision at the moment and expect mature behavior in the future. Habits previously formed constitute the basis for present adjustment and a decision today can be expected to be only a step toward improved behavior.

Without habits a person would find it extremely difficult to perform the daily routines involved in living; but unfortunately, life and the conditions of life are changing constantly. Habits which were once of an adjustive nature may become so rigid that adaptation to changed situations becomes more difficult. Consequently, one of the most important habits that the mature person will have formed is the attitudinal one of periodically examining his habits to see which of them are of advantage at the time and which of them are hampering the prospects of continued growth. Here again is seen the element of balance in evaluating the criteria of maturity.

8. A person is mature when he has achieved a philosophy of life that is presently satisfactory and evolving. This is perhaps the most exacting criterion of maturity and the point at which the greatest number of persons will fall short. The point of view taken here is that philosophy is a well-thought-out system of values. It is a system or formula for weighing the relative merit of the various objectives which have been set for oneself. It is distinctly more than a number of independently accepted clichés or mottoes since, unless he thinks them through to see whether or not there is a conflict, a person acting on mottoes may find some of his objectives in opposition to one another.

A most important aspect of a mature philosophy is that it should be dynamic. At least some of the objectives which one selects should be able to be accomplished in the foreseeable future. When these objectives have been realized, they must be replaced or modified by other goals. The basis for the emphasis on the importance of goals is found in the principle of psychology that all behavior is either purposeful or purposive. (Purposive behavior, because the motives are not recognized by the organism, often results in random or trial-and-error activity. Purposeful behavior implies that the organism has some, more or less clear, conception of the goal.) Thus, life itself is dependent upon goals and the satisfaction of needs. An effective life is dependent upon the clarity of goals. This

¹⁷ For a detailed treatment of the nature of "good" and "bad" habits see Harold W. Bernard, *Toward Better Personal Adjustment*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1951, Chap. IV.

clarification of goals, with the improvement in effectiveness that would result, is the major service performed by a genuine philosophy of life.

It has been pointed out above that some goals in a mature philosophy may actually be unachievable. Yet, even though they cannot be achieved, they provide something toward which to work. The purchase of a certain kind of home may be a temporary goal that can be reached; the completion of a unit of study or a committee report may be a short-time goal. These are both achievable aspects of the unachievable goal of being happy. Other unachievable goals might include such objectives as being a perfect teacher or an undeniably good parent, attaining perfect mental health, or living the life of a true Christian. The fact that such purposes cannot be fully realized does not prevent the mature person from putting them into his philosophy as goals toward which to strive. In fact, it is in approaching nearer to these goals and others like them that the mature individual will find a continuing source of satisfaction and a constant lure to living.

Reflection upon the criteria of maturity will make it clear that maturity is closely akin to mental health. Because of this close relationship, it can be said that to the extent to which a teacher helps his pupils gain higher levels of maturity, to that extent he is fostering their mental health. Some of the criteria listed above, when they are adjusted to the age of the pupils, can be immediate goals; others offer only goals toward which to work during school age.

ASPECTS OF THE MENTAL HYGIENE VIEWPOINT

[There are three phases of the mental hygiene viewpoint, which concern the teacher in varying degrees. These phases, or aspects, are (1) the conservative, (2) the preventive, and (3) the curative.

The Conservative Aspect of Mental Hygiene. It is said that the great majority of babies are born perfect. Certainly, there are many children who seem to be happy, vigorous, and curious. They begin school with a great store of pleasurable anticipation. The majority of children in the upper grades and high school can safely be said to be in good mental health. For this predominant body of children the task of the school and the teacher is to preserve the outlook and habits that have carried the children successfully thus far along in their lives. Working out this purpose becomes a matter of seeing to it that the organization of the class, the methods used, the objectives determined upon, and the social relations that prevail are such that the individual can continue to be confident, eager, and happy. In general, this aspect of the mental hygiene viewpoint can be realized by the application of generalized principles, by over-all

organization, and by putting to work the knowledge of psychological principles. It can to a great degree be considered an impersonal aspect.

The Preventive Aspect of Mental Hygiene. The second aspect of mental hygiene tends toward a more personal viewpoint. The initial phase of the preventive aspect may be equivalent to the preservative aspect, but it goes somewhat further, in that it is concerned with individuals who are on the brink of mental ill-health. It might be likened to the administration of shots that are given after an individual has been exposed to measles or smallpox (in the latter case, when there has been no previous vaccination). The preventive aspect of mental hygiene involves special programs for individuals after they have revealed symptoms of a beginning of mental and emotional disturbance. Thus, a child who is occasionally truant, rather than habitually truant, will be studied to see what his background difficulties are, in the hope that adjustments can be made before the truancy has spread into other symptoms or has become a habitual reaction.

In the main, it is in the preventive and preservative aspects of mental hygiene that teachers will find the opportunity for greatest service. They can set the tempo of learning situations and control the general social atmosphere of the classroom, and they can give attention to the minor deviations of individual behavior that give warning of later, more serious problems of adjustment.

The Curative Aspect of Mental Hygiene. Just as the preservative aspect of mental hygiene shades into the preventive, so does the preventive shade into the curative. When he first contacts a certain pupil, the teacher may discover that he already has some marked deviation of behavior which cannot be considered to be within even the wider limits of normality. These borderline cases present a difficult problem to the teacher, since a precarious decision must be made as to whether he will try to do something for the individual or whether the situation is such that anyone less than a fully prepared psychiatrist should say "hands off," because the danger of doing still further damage is great. With this difficult situation in mind, one must look upon the curative aspect of mental hygiene as a technical problem that should be largely left to experts. When emotional illness is serious, the incipient breakdown may be hastened by the "help" of someone who is acting on good intentions alone. Recognizing this hazard, Robert H. Felix, Chief of the Mental Hygiene Division, Public Health Service of the Federal Security Agency, says, "Don't stick your neck out. With the best intentions in the world, amateur psychiatrists can do lasting damage to the emotionally unstable. As a matter of blunt fact, learning to do no harm is one of the basic tenets of mental hygiene."¹⁸

¹⁸ Robert H. Felix, "The Teacher's Role in *Mental Health* Defense," *School Life*, Vol. 31 (January, 1949), p. 14.

What Teachers Can Do. But there is a great deal that the classroom teacher can do, short of posing as a psychiatrist. Teachers can learn some of the basic principles, they can gather data, they can seek information that will help them to determine which are the serious "clinical" cases. Then, too, there are many children whose symptoms are passing and minor but who might, if preventive and preservative mental hygiene were not applied, develop habits which would hamper future adjustment. One classroom teacher has stated the problem as follows:

All of us will agree that we do something to all children whether or not it is intended. Therefore, it would be far better if teachers knew what to do.

There is also the situation which demands prompt action by the teacher. Many deeds which sometimes turn out to be rather rash could be avoided.

Think of all the thousands of boys and girls for whom there will never be any clinician. They are entitled to develop their whole personality which can best be done when the teacher understands the elements of good mental health.]

It is undoubtedly as true in mental health as in any other field that, even if the child can be seen by a specialist, the ultimate product depends upon the cooperation of the classroom teacher with the clinician. To fully cooperate, the classroom teacher needs a basic understanding of the problem.¹⁹

We can look forward to, and work toward, the time when there will be a sufficient number of psychologists and psychiatrists to take care of the needs of all school children. At present the supply of such specialists is woefully inadequate and, in some cases where psychiatrists are available, the cost of service is such as to be out of reach of the parents of many children. More than half of the secondary-school systems in the United States enroll fewer than two hundred pupils and employ fewer than nine teachers. In such systems the adding of specialists involves expense which school patrons feel is either unbearable or unwarranted. Even in the larger systems which can and do employ psychiatrists or psychologists, the teachers will have to see to carrying out the recommendations of the expert. Thus, all teachers need to have as a part of their basic professional equipment or knowledge an acquaintance with the facts and principles of mental hygiene and an understanding of their own role and responsibility for better mental health. The basic fact and challenge is: If teachers do not help, some unfortunate children will receive *no* help at all.

The purpose of this book is to give teachers a background for understanding the nature of good and poor mental health, to clarify the nature and meaning of the symptoms of inadequate adjustment, and to acquaint the teacher with some of the techniques that can be used for determining the motivations of children who are deviates. A great part of the good

¹⁹ Margaret Perry, Classroom teacher, Hillsboro, Ore., May, 1949.

that teachers can do in improving the mental health of children lies not in what they can do *for* the child, but in what they do *in front of* the child; that is, the example they set and the classroom atmosphere they create. For this reason, a considerable portion of this book is devoted to a discussion of the factors that condition the mental health of teachers, with a view to providing the teachers with suggestions for (1) removing some of the handicaps and (2) learning to live with those handicaps which cannot be readily removed.

As has been suggested in the words used as the title of an article, mental health is no mystery.²⁰ It is the result of scientific and empirical knowledge applied to the inevitable problems of daily living.

GOALS OF MENTAL HYGIENE

[The goals of mental hygiene have been expressed in the definition by Shaffer cited above, “. . . the attainment of a fuller, happier, more harmonious and more effective existence.”

Realization of Potentialities. A full life is one in which, among other things, the individual comes close to realizing his potentialities.) He will have grown and he keeps on growing, in a productive sense. This means, for teachers, that they seek better ways of doing their important work, they study and take joy in the social impact of teaching, they are not satisfied just to “get by” but want to do the best job possible. It means, for their pupils, that those who are capable of good scholastic work do it. The varied activities provided in the schoolroom permit every child to experience a degree of success, regardless of the nature and the measure of his particular talents, not just his academic talents.

(A full life is one in which some exercise is given to all facets of the total personality—the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Everyone has potentialities in these areas, and a goal of mental hygiene is to provide exercise and expression of them.) Here again is seen the necessity for variety in the school program. The mental aspects are fairly well taken care of, except, perhaps, that there is a lack of opportunity for superior accomplishment by gifted children. The realization of physical potentialities needs more carefully considered attention, particularly at the high-school level. Increasingly, attention is being given to emotional expression and, as more teachers grasp the basic notion of organismic psychology and what is implied in mental hygiene, still more improvement will ensue. The increase in attention to socialization and world brotherhood is giving sensible attention to spiritual values, but at the present

²⁰ Norma E. Cutts and Nicholas Moseley, “Mental Health Is No Mystery,” *National Education Association Journal*, Vol. 37 (November, 1948), p. 525.

time some teachers are rather fearful of referring to human relationships as a spiritual realization.

Full realization of potentialities is an unachievable ideal. However, a very practical goal of mental hygiene in the classroom is that of *coming closer* to such realization for each child than would be possible if no attention were given to the goal. The greater realization of potentialities cannot be left to chance; it must be a seriously considered objective.

Happiness. Although happiness is a goal of mental hygiene, it is not something that can be sought directly. Philosophers have frequently said that when happiness is a direct objective it becomes increasingly elusive. In fact, it is difficult even to state what happiness is. The things that lead to happiness for one are not necessarily the things which make another happy. Perhaps the best way to express it is to say that, if a person feels he is happy, the observer must ordinarily believe that he is. Thus, happiness is a state of mind, a way of looking at things.

When a pupil enjoys his relations with his classmates, when he takes pride in his work, when his fears are short-lived or have no foundation, when he has opportunities to exercise all sides of his personality, and when he looks forward eagerly to the adventures of the coming day, then we can feel assured that he is happy.

Harmonious Existence. A harmonious existence depends upon success in two efforts—getting along with oneself and getting along with others. Getting along with oneself involves such matters as being able to decide between two attractions and, having decided, feeling no regret for having made the decision. Another requirement is to be able to accept one's shortcomings with grace—without bemoaning one's evil fate—and to be able to exercise one's greatest talents without boasting and arrogance. The harmonious existence calls for the attainment of such a degree of self-confidence that problems are attacked aggressively and worry is held to an absolute minimum. Living in harmony with oneself is certainly dependent upon eliminating such character traits as greed, suspicion, jealousy, and hate, to mention only a few of the more prevalent obstacles to personal harmony.

An Effective Existence. An effective existence might well be considered the summarizing result of self-realization, learning to be happy, and being able to get along with oneself and with others. It means getting the most done with the least expenditure of energy—that is, high productivity with the least waste. A person may get a considerable amount of work done, but if, in the process, he tires himself needlessly and cuts himself off from others, he cannot be considered efficient. To be effective (in the sense of efficiency), he must come reasonably close to the realization of his capacities for the service of mankind. In this sense, Hitler could not be

regarded as effective because, although he accomplished much, his work was not socially oriented.

Use of the term *effectiveness* does not imply that an individual who accomplishes less than his neighbor is therefore ineffective. The mental health viewpoint would allow for the placement of the accolade "effective" on the truck driver who earns considerably less salary than the life-insurance executive. In terms of the former's mental ability, opportunity for education, and social and economic background, his accomplishment may be very commendable.

Effectiveness should be thought of in relative terms rather than in terms of absolutes. Thus, the average student whose academic intelligence is low, who has to work outside of school hours, who has less than buoyant health, and who gets along with his teachers and peers, may be effective; while his honor-roll classmate may be ineffective because he cultivates no interests beyond the academic and fails to associate with his peers. The newspapers, as this was being written, carried the story of a college professor who killed the president of his institution and the dean of the school in which he had been employed, and then committed suicide. Here was a man who had apparently achieved a position of eminence but who was described by his fellow staff members as being "a lonesome man—not mixing much." He had accomplished something, but his life could not be rated as effective. Again, effectiveness must be judged in terms of social helpfulness and of lack of waste.

SUMMARY

Contemporary man has learned a great deal about controlling the physical world but apparently has a vast amount still to learn about improving his personal and social life. Ignorance of how to live is reflected in alarming statistics on the extent of mental ill-health, and this forces recognition of mental health as a problem of prime importance. The problem is being considered seriously by the Federal government and by educators. The effectiveness of mental hygiene work will ultimately depend upon the understanding of it by classroom teachers and upon their ability to implement their understanding.

It cannot be said with certainty that contemporary man is more susceptible to mental illness than were his ancestors; but it is evident that something can and must be done. Man must be taught to live more fully, harmoniously, happily, and effectively. This is mental health. The techniques used to achieve this goal are known as mental hygiene.

Teachers can do much to reveal the way of life that will make it possible for individuals to grow effectively toward social, intellectual, and emotional maturity. They can do this by conserving the mental health that many already enjoy, by preventing further progress toward break-

down after the first symptoms have been observed, and by helping to cure those who have not broken down so completely that they can be helped only by a psychiatrist.

The principles of mental hygiene are not a mystery. Use of them is largely a matter of applying what we already know about effective living. New insights are, however, being periodically achieved. Since too few parents will have the opportunity to learn these principles under formal instruction, the classroom teachers are in the most advantageous position to effect better mental health for young citizens of our nation.

It would be erroneous to conclude that a pessimistic note is being sounded in this chapter. One should not take the view that the nation is rapidly becoming one of psychotics and neurotics. The fact is that there are many, many mature and healthy citizens. Most of the children in school are solving their problems satisfactorily. The proper view of the situation is that the cancerous growths on mental health can be decreased. Happier and more effective lives can be lived. Statistics indicate the present status. The study of mental hygiene optimistically points the way to improvement.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Scan a daily newspaper for items which give evidence of the need for a widespread and constructive mental hygiene program.
2. Compile a list of the resources available in your state which are directly pointed toward the improvement of mental health.
3. Present data for and against the argument that mental ill-health has a greater incidence today than in former generations.
4. Do you agree that the best starting point for the improvement of mental health is within the classrooms of the nation? What would be another logical starting point?
5. Can you think of any additional criteria for the evaluation of genuine psychological maturity than those cited in the chapter?
6. Which of the three aspects—conservative, preventive, curative—do you consider to be of most importance for classroom teachers?
7. Can you add any criteria of mental health to those which are implied in the definition cited in this chapter?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

BEERS, CLIFFORD, *A Mind That Found Itself*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1917. 363 pp.

The first part of the book is an interesting biography of a man who "lost his mind" and who fought a seesaw battle to regain balance. He won. The last part of the book deals with his efforts to establish better conditions for the mentally ill. Beers is sometimes referred to as the father of the modern mental hygiene movement.

Federal Security Agency, *The National Mental Health Program* (Mental Health Series, No. 4), Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, June, 1948. 7 pp.

This booklet describes the purpose and workings of the National Mental Health Act passed in 1946. Stress is placed on the relation of the Federal government to state agencies and state mental hygiene programs.

MYERS, C. ROGER, *Toward Mental Health in School*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1939. 151 pp.

The first half of the book deals with the extent, nature, and seriousness of the problem of mental health. The second half deals with the interpretation and remediation of specific types of "problem children," i.e., the evaluation of symptoms and the removal of causes. A good overview of the problem is presented.

RYAN, W. CARSON, *Mental Health through Education*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1938. 315 pp.

Dr. Ryan reports the results of a year's investigation of the status of mental hygiene in our schools. Many shortcomings were discovered in the application of what is known about fostering mental health. He suggests specific steps toward achieving a more wholesome school life in terms of teachers, administrators, methods, and curricula. The book is brief but sound and applicable.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

NOTE: It is suggested that the instructor explore the possibility of appointing a committee of students to preview films that have been selected by class vote. Members of the committee might direct the attention of the class to certain features of the film, prior to the showing before the class, and then lead the follow-up discussion.

Emotional Health, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42nd St. New York 36. (20 min, BW, sd.)

Shows a young man with ailments for which the school doctor could find no physical cause. He is sent to a psychiatrist and through discussion is able to understand the basis of his psychosomatic illness. Later he comprehends the early origin of his own problems and is able to solve them.

Feelings of Depression, McGraw-Hill. (30 min, BW, sd.)

The story of a thirty-year-old businessman, of how he became depressed, and of the factors that precipitated his depression. Among other things, the film shows how John's personality development from childhood made him vulnerable to those factors.

Feelings of Hostility, McGraw-Hill. (27 min, BW, sd.)

The case of Claire from early childhood, when her father dies suddenly, to her development into an outwardly successful "career woman." A trailer reviews and emphasizes the episodes in the girl's life which contribute to her emotional maladjustment.

2

HUMAN NEEDS AND MENTAL HEALTH

IF THERE were a panacea, a "nut-shell" answer, to the questions involved in achieving and maintaining mental health, it might very well be in terms of the satisfaction of human needs. One enjoys mental health to the extent to which his needs are gratified and when any one specific need does not conflict with any other in the total pattern of living. Persons are in poor mental health to the degree and consistency with which their needs remain unsatisfied and the extent to which the satisfaction of one need conflicts with that of another. The word *need* itself suggests the degree of importance. It concerns something vital, indispensable, or urgently requisite. "A good heredity and the happy disposition that results from a good bringing-up are assets. But the best-endowed person cannot remain healthy unless he satisfies his normal physical and social needs." ¹

THE NATURE OF NEEDS

Analysis of the various lists of needs by psychologists and mental hygienists shows that human needs are just what the dictionary definition implies; they are vital, indispensable, and urgently requisite. In some cases if these needs are not satisfied, the result may be death. This is true of certain organic needs, such as the need for food, moisture, protection from extremes of temperature, and the like. Denial of the need to preserve the race does not result in the death of the individual, but it would result in extinction of the species. It may be that lack of satisfaction of some of the personal and social needs would cause death, but there is no certainty of this. It does appear, though, that denial of such needs brings about a lack of desire to live, which might indirectly hasten death. But even though there are needs the denial of which does not result in death, there are other reasons for considering even such needs to be vital and requisite.

The significance of satisfying needs is apparent also in the development of personality. When they are met efficiently, the result usually is a

¹ Norma E. Cutts and Nicholas Moseley, "Mental Health Is No Mystery," *National Education Association Journal*, Vol. 37 (November, 1948), p. 526.

balanced and integrated personality. The individual becomes a happy, harmonious, and productive person, who is a source of gratification to society as well as to himself. Satisfaction does not necessarily imply that there is satiation. Satisfaction does imply that needs are *on the way to being met* by a progressing and confident person. On the other hand, when needs are not met, or when their satisfaction is delayed too long, the person may become frustrated, inhibited, and unbalanced, developing a defeated, discouraged attitude. This, at best, produces a lack of activity and a wish to retreat from social contacts; while at worst, it turns the individual into a liability or a danger to society. These broad generalizations will be analyzed in more detail as specific needs are discussed.

Multiplicity of Needs. No two authors seem to agree on a listing of needs. Although most books on psychology and mental hygiene discuss the nature and variety of needs, the terminology and the length of the lists vary considerably. One writer lists forty basic needs, another gives a list of twenty-eight, many cite from five to eight, and a few reduce the number to two or three. In this book, needs are classified into three categories with representative subdivisions—subdivisions which are considered to be illustrative rather than inclusive. These categories are organic needs, personal needs, and social needs. It must be emphasized that these are not mutually exclusive; in fact, there is a great deal of overlapping and the division is made only for the sake of convenience in discussion.

Regardless of the categories used, it must be admitted that a great number of conditions must be satisfied, or must be on the way to being satisfied, if a person is to live and if he is to attain mental health. Many of these needs must be adequately met if life is to continue. Other needs seem to vary in their intensity from individual to individual and according to the level of maturity accomplished by each. That is, lack of satisfaction of a particular need for one person throws him completely off balance, while the same unmet need has little visible effect on another—he is only denied the opportunity for more complete development in the area which the need most intimately concerns. This assertion can be tested by calling to mind the fact that there are individual differences (differences between persons) and trait differences (differences within the individual). Thus, it appears that some children need more opportunity for exercise, love, independence, and companionship than do others. It is worth while to consider, however, that the differences may be more apparent than real. Perhaps the child who appears to need little exercise has merely learned to put up with the fact that it is inconvenient for his parents to give him any more play space or to let him have the run of the yard. Another child may have been denied a healthful amount of loving care and tenderness and have early developed compensations

for that lack. The reason why a particular child appears not to need companionship may be that his early efforts at friendship were repulsed, or it may be that aloofness is merely the result of his not having had the opportunity to gain experience in making friendly contacts. The fact that there are apparent differences in the intensity of the need is no proof that denial, or partial denial, of the need has not had a limiting effect upon the development of a symmetrical personality.

Needs Differ in Intensity at Various Ages. The multiplicity of needs is emphasized by the fact that living and growing seem to create additional requirements. Thus, in earliest infancy the child seems to be content if his organic needs are satisfied. But within a few days, he seems to have a desire to be cuddled and fondled. He can at first be left alone while awake, but by the time he can walk he becomes restive when he is left alone. At this age he seems, from an adult viewpoint at least, not to need a feeling of accomplishment. He is satisfied with the opportunity merely to manipulate. But at the age of two or three years, there is definitely a need for accomplishment, as can be seen in such enraged cries as "I can do it myself," and "Let me do it." Children at this age seem to need a great deal of love; perhaps the need is no less powerful in adolescence, but outward appearances indicate the adolescent is less inclined to seek a demonstrative manifestation of parental love. However, it cannot be said with certainty that the adolescent has less need for genuine love than has the younger person. During adolescence the drive for peer companionship becomes strong. Babies often play in the same room without giving attention to other children (independent play) and sometimes play beside one another without playing together (parallel play). Adolescents are very much aware of the presence of others and concerned with it. The need for peer acceptance is becoming insistent. The need for independence is becoming continually more marked.

The needs which are most intense during childhood and adolescence are still present in adulthood, but their imperiousness is less apparent. Needs which are now dominant include the need for well-defined purposes, a feeling that progress is being made. The day-to-day existence of the child and the early adolescent is no longer satisfactory. The need for freedom of activity is intensified and, to the extent that it is denied, there are likely to be unhappy, discouraged, or restless individuals. Perhaps in old age needs become less imperious, except the organic ones. This may be due not so much to diminution in the need itself as to having learned how to satisfy (or be on the way toward satisfying) needs or having been forced to learn to live with handicapping influences. One need that is receiving attention, as a greater proportion of our population comes to be classed as old, is the continuing need of a purpose. It is thought by many scholars that death may be hastened by retirement from

one's occupation or profession, with the resultant feeling of lack of purpose.

Examination of the differing intensities of needs at various ages shows that needs are continuous. There is neither a complete satisfaction of them or an outgrowing of them. Although the degree of intensity may vary, a need is something that people of all ages must satisfy. If needs are unsatisfied, life ceases, at the worst, or it is unsatisfactory, at the best. Needs thus become one of the focal points around which the study of mental hygiene may center.

ORGANIC NEEDS

Nature of Organic Needs. Even very simple organisms need food, oxygen, water, and proper temperature in order to survive. The human organism, because it is more complicated, needs also to be protected from pressures or bruises and has a need for periods of activity and of rest. At first glance, these needs might seem to be so fundamental as to be of little concern to students of mental hygiene. If the needs are satisfied, the human will live; if they are not satisfied, he will die. This is true; but the fact remains that each organism must learn anew how to satisfy the need. Contemporary psychologists discount the notion that there is instinctive equipment, or mechanism, that automatically will satisfy the need. While the need may be manifest in general activity or restlessness, the way of satisfaction must be learned. Moreover, there is a need for balance or moderation. Too much food, too much water, too much oxygen can be destructive to life. In short, there is a need for a proper amount and kind of food, a proper amount of water and the like, if the organism is to be healthy as well as alive. Mental hygienists are concerned with the balanced satisfaction of organic needs because physical health is one of the foundation stones of mental health.

The School and Organic Needs. Aside from providing balanced meals in the cafeteria, the school does nothing directly in the way of obtaining a proper diet for children. A great deal can be and is being done indirectly toward meeting organic needs through teaching about proper health habits and following up the teaching with periodic health examinations, dental assistance, and the observance of health routines in schools (watching for dirty hands, unwashed teeth, etc.). Attention is given to proper lighting, adequate ventilation, atmospheric humidity, and temperature control, not only to provide a healthy present environment but also to give pupils an example of the need for continued attention to such matters. The teacher has the responsibility of teaching about the satisfaction of these organic needs by precept and example.

The complexity of the nature of needs is seen when the polarity of behavior shown in the need for activity and rest is examined. Man seems

to be a perverse creature, in that he wants what he has not got and does not want what he has. When he is active his next goal immediately becomes the desire and, later, the need for rest. After a period of rest the need for activity again appears. Instead of recognizing this alternative aspect of rest and activity, the schools have apparently acknowledged it only to the extent to which restless children have forced it upon their attention. School people have only recently recognized the need for alternate periods of rest and activity in practice. Many of them still seem not to recognize the validity of the theory. This theory is that both the rest and the activity are educative. Children learn not only when sitting quietly in their seats as they read and listen, but also during their play periods. There is a need for recognizing that the drive to activity which is manifest in the play of children is not something to be tolerated, but something to be welcomed as a source of growth and development. The contemporary view is expressed in the following words:

Modern students of child development have come to understand that, from a biological point of view, children's spontaneous activities provide a wholesome outlet for energy acquired through *metabolic and other vital organic processes*. It is also through play that the child learns the many neuromuscular skills, such as grasping, throwing, drawing, and other hand-eye coordinations, so imperative to the development of more mature functions. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly apparent that happy childhood, including the development of social attitudes, is dependent upon at least a *minimum amount of freedom to engage in untrammelled activity* purely for the sake of the physical and emotional enjoyment which it provides.²

An integral part of recognizing the child's need for activity is that of providing him ample room for play and exercise. Children must have space for the freedom of movement. This is seen even in infants, who vociferously protest against being held tight or cry when their clothes prevent free movement. This need for space is recognized by school administrators and architects who figure the size of the school and playground in terms of the probable enrollment of the school. Thus, each child has his space for growing, exercising, and experiencing. When a school has outgrown the available space, teachers and administrators make efficient use of the space available by staggering the recess periods. Frequently today teachers wisely group the desks, chairs, and tables close together in one part of the room, so that the pupils will have more free floor space than would be available if the furniture were uniformly spaced over the whole floor.

² Louis P. Thorpe, *Child Psychology and Development*, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1946, p. 199. By permission of the publisher. (Italics not in original.)

Another way in which teachers may aid in the satisfaction of the organic needs is to give attention to posture. Incorrect posture interferes with proper digestion and breathing. But the technique for encouraging better posture is far different from that used a decade or two ago. Then formal exercises were regularly scheduled and the teacher reminded pupils to stand and sit properly. Now the emphasis is on whole-body exercise, which is provided by encouraging pupils to engage in a wide variety of play, both formal and informal. Instead of merely calling attention to incorrect sitting posture, the teacher of today tries to see to it that each child sits in a chair and at a table which fits him. When desks are unadjustable, seats are assigned according to the size of the pupil, so that as good a fit as possible is obtained, and changes are made during the year to provide adaptation to growth changes. The contemporary teacher further recognizes that improper posture may be a symptom of insufficient sleep or inadequate diet. She therefore gives attention to the diet and sleep habits of the child by consulting with the parents. She makes a study of the child to find out whether the school program is physically too stimulating for him as an individual, and she makes proper provision for rest or restriction of activity. In short, she recognizes that poor posture may be a symptom of fatigue. Of course, there are times when poor posture is merely a matter of habit. In such cases, the teacher may call the pupil's attention to the matter. If a child keeps his eyes too close to the paper while writing, the teacher may properly remind him to hold his head up, so that his eyes will be at the right distance from his work. She should not, however, overlook the fact that there may be glare or shadows on the paper, which may be helped by changing the position, or that the child may need to have his vision corrected with glasses.

The periodic health examination, mentioned earlier, frequently becomes a formal procedure, without adequate provision for follow-up. Teachers too frequently feel that examinations and follow-up are a responsibility of doctors and nurses; but even in very well-staffed schools, this is not the case. If the examination is to count as it should, teachers must know what the results are and be informed of the proper procedures for follow-up. A brief lecture by the medical staff will not be enough. It is no more possible to drive home lessons on health in one session than it is to teach the complications of arithmetic in an hour. Even if the follow-up is simply a matter of asking a question or giving a periodic reminder, the chances for success will be much greater. If the follow-up includes teacher contacts with the parents, so much the better. The old slogan "A sound mind in a sound body" contains much truth. While the two cannot be considered synonymous, it must be admitted that an important step in the pursuit of mental health is attention to

organic needs through heeding the principles of physical health. It is well to consider these factors in both the preventive and the remedial aspect of mental hygiene in the schools. Teachers cannot afford to overlook the possibility that inadequacy in meeting organic needs may be an element in manifestation of the symptoms of poor mental health.

FUNDAMENTAL PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS

Just as the satisfaction of organic needs conditions the degree of physical health, so the satisfaction of psychological needs influences the degree of mental health. It would be difficult to prove that satisfaction of needs is requisite to life; but certainly such satisfaction is necessary for complete living and for well-rounded personality development. In this section some of these needs are listed and suggestions for meeting them in school are made; but actually the entire book is concerned with the basic problem of meeting human needs.

The Need to Feel Secure. It would be easy to get the impression that the need for feelings of security may be satisfied in a given person by the way in which others treat him. Frequently emphasis is laid on the belief that a child feels secure when he is loved by his parents, when he gets a great deal of time and attention, when his wishes are quickly satisfied, when he is not sternly disciplined, and when economic circumstances are such that these factors and his organic needs are readily recognized.

When a child is fed whenever he is hungry, he gets more than food—he gets a feeling of confidence that his needs are going to be met; he feels that he can trust his world. As all the successive difficult lessons of social adjustment come along, he has this basic security and confidence to build upon. If, on the other hand, he is left hungry and thwarted by an inflexible feeding schedule, he may begin to doubt and fear the world, and is likely to approach his subsequent experiences with doubt, fear, and insecurity.³

To a large extent these things add up to the fact that the child needs to feel that adults have faith in him. He must know that he is accepted for what he is, because of his assets and in spite of his shortcomings. This faith must include adult belief in his good intentions, without giving too much attention to what his actions really are.

Another less frequently emphasized factor involved in personal security rests upon the fact that a secure person needs to have faith in his own ability to solve his problems, to overcome obstacles in the path of achievement, and to stand on his own feet "in the shifting sands of time."

³ Lawrence K. Frank, *Personality and Culture*, New York: Hinds, Hayden and Eldredge, Inc., 1948, p. 7. By permission of the present publishers, The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Danville, Ill.

This second basis of security has all too often been overlooked. Security is something which must be won, not merely something which others can give. This does not deny that the love, attention, and material advantages which parents can provide are important, but it does imply that security depends upon more than external factors. The love of adults and the affection of peers is a good starting point; but as the child grows older, he must surely become less dependent on others and more self-reliant. An adult who leans upon others does not have a genuine and dependable sense of security. Therefore, the opportunity for a child to develop manual, mental, and social skills must not be withheld by overindulgent adults. This relates, among other things, back to the fundamental need for freedom, for providing for unhampered development through a variety of play and work experiences.

When the factors that make for security are lacking, the inevitable result is the manifestation of symptoms of mental ill-health. These symptoms may take any of a variety of forms; but the most outstanding are, on the one hand, fearfulness, timidity, social reticence, lying, stealing, or retreat from competition, and on the other hand, overaggressiveness, bullying, exhibitionism, or other attempts to compensate for the felt lack.

A thumbnail sketch of what can be done in the school to develop genuine feelings of security may be obtained by examining the nature and manifestations of feelings of insecurity. First of all, the teacher must be able and willing to show affection for the pupils. He must realize that intentions are not always synonymous with actions. There should be faith in the improvability of personality and behavior. All of which may be summarized by saying that the child must be accepted not only for what he is but for what he might become. However, there is a need for balance in the amount of help given. Teachers may properly cushion some of the difficulties which children have, but they should be careful not to make the child helpless by overprotection. The shy child should not be made a teacher's pet. The slow learner should not be assigned only the tasks which he can easily perform. Rather, continuing emphasis should be placed upon understanding each pupil well enough so that opportunities will be provided for him to develop those particular talents which will give him a feeling of competence. To a very large extent, it will be the skills developed by each individual that will give him genuine feelings of personal security.

It should be emphasized that the need to *feel* secure is the point at issue—not the need to *be* secure. It is a false kind of security that is based upon the protection of others and upon living in a static environment. When a person can be made to feel secure in his ability to meet changing conditions, his attitude will be one that is helpful in facing the problem of continuous adjustment to an ever-changing world. If this point is kept

in mind, there will be less danger of overemphasis on the aspect of security that is dependent upon one's relations with others.

The Need to Manipulate and Satisfy Curiosity. Among the human needs frequently listed by psychologists is "the need for new experiences." It is first noted in the very young child as an almost compulsive desire to touch and feel everything that can be reached. In preschool children it is manifest in their inability to settle into a routine; there seems to be a constant need for change in activity and experience. School children reveal the need in their constant desire to range widely and be on the go, in order to see new things and places. The adolescent shows his curiosity in his reluctance to take the good advice of older people; he wishes to find out for himself. Adults reveal their curiosity in ways which are probably conditioned by their early experiences. Some have an avid desire to read, others devote their time and money to travel, some bend their energies to research. Even those adults whose curiosity does not seem to be strong show boredom and dissatisfaction with highly routine and static conditions. It seems probable that more adults would reveal greater curiosity if they were not afraid of meeting defeat in case they were to hazard a change of jobs or of living locale.

The author has often remarked to prospective teachers in his classes that something negative seems to happen to the curiosity of children as the result of their school experiences. The kindergarten and primary-school child is enthusiastic and eager. He takes great delight in the fact that there are so many school days in the week. But this delight seems to wane in the middle grades and, by the time the pupils reach high school, they bemoan the fact that there are so few Saturdays and Sundays. It is to be hoped that a part of this is due to the psychology of suggestion, which would make one feel odd if he were to admit liking school. But much of the dislike for school can undoubtedly be accounted for by there being too little opportunity for manipulation, direct experience, and the satisfaction of personal curiosity. This explanation has been effectively stated by Caroline Pratt in the stimulating book, *I Learn from Children*:

But the child, unhampered, does not waste time. Not a minute of it. He is driven constantly by that little fire burning inside him, to do, to see, to learn. You will not find a child anywhere who will sit still and idle unless he is sick—or in a traditional classroom. . . .

I saw the urge to see, touch, experience everything at first hand. At the moment that we interpose second-hand knowledge—from the teacher instead of from the world itself, from books rather than from life—again we have begun to waste the child. True, there comes a time in a child's learning about his constantly expanding world when he can no longer go out and see for himself. For the far-away and long-ago he must turn to books and museums.

But the moment when he must begin to do his learning from second-hand sources is a critical one. If we thrust him toward it too soon, before he has learned to gather his facts and relate them for himself, to ask his own questions and find his own answers, then we have opened another breach through which the desire to learn can be lost.⁴

One of the things that teachers can do in recognition of the need to satisfy curiosity is to avoid overorganization and the establishment of routines which bring about monotony. Operating on a punch-clock regularity, slavish adherence to a syllabus or course of study, sticking to the text, and avoidance of wandering from the subject are techniques which are guaranteed soporifics for curiosity. Curiosity is an individual—a personal—matter. This means that there must not only be variety of activities for the group but also variety in the matter of choice for individuals. Teachers should be on a constant search for ways to make their teaching more concrete. At all grade levels, from kindergarten through high school and college, it is advantageous to provide opportunities to touch, feel, and manipulate the objects being studied. As Caroline Pratt has suggested, there is a tendency to give secondhand material—teacher's lectures and routine readings, for example—too abruptly, with a resultant diminution of curiosity. Teachers would do well to realize that verbalisms are inadequate kinds of learning. Curiosity about the meaning of citizenship can better be satisfied by some direct contact with civic activities than by knowing the answers to questions at the end of the chapter in a civics textbook.

An obstacle in the way of permitting the most advantageous use of curiosity is the haste with which teachers answer questions. Many of them seem to feel that it will be embarrassing not to know the answer to the question. Sometimes they answer vaguely or with half-truths, to cover up their ignorance, rather than to admit that they do not know. The more thoughtful teachers, however, feel that a pupil's question is a starting point for growth rather than a finish line. They spur on the pupils by showing enthusiasm for the question, suggesting sources of information and calling for a follow-up report. Teachers who can accept the fact that they do not have to be oracles but may most advantageously be learners with their pupils will be doing much to keep alive the driving power of children's curiosity.

The rephrasing of the pupil's answers is another deleterious influence on curiosity. Too many teachers feel that if the conclusion to a particular problem or study is not stated in the exact words the teacher had in mind it is not adequately presented; they therefore put it into

⁴ Caroline Pratt, *I Learn from Children*, New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1948, pp. 10 and 13. By permission of the publisher.

such precise language as will drive the point home. But even though this may satisfy the teacher, it does not satisfy the student. He soon gets two erroneous notions. One is that he need not listen to student responses because the teacher can finally be depended on to state the proposition in final form. The other is more to the point—as long as the teacher will give the answer anyway, there is little use for pupils to look for information. They can get it more effortlessly by listening to the oracle. But the outcome is verbalism, not knowledge, and genuine curiosity remains unsatisfied.

Much is being done in certain classrooms which suggests effective ways of recognizing and capitalizing on the need to satisfy curiosity. In the primary grades, teachers are making use of the experience approach, wherein pupils engage in some activity, trip, or excursion and then write their own stories. Youngsters in the middle and upper grades are learning how to organize into committees which are responsible for discovering and reporting related phases of information on some central topic being studied. Junior-high-school pupils visit factories, governmental organizations, businesses of various kinds, and enter other activities in which they are interested, and make these the focal points for periods of study and real learning. High-school teachers have long made sporadic use of field trips to give their study more vitality; but the work-experience type of study seems to promise most in the area of manipulation and direct satisfaction of curiosity. Work experience provides the element of reality which can make more clearly perceptible the value of the theoretical presentations made in textbooks. Four-H clubs have long recognized the value of this approach, but at present only small beginnings have been made in metropolitan areas. Yet where these things have been tried, the curiosity of pupils remains at an invigorating level.

The Need to Achieve. As has been indicated, the need to achieve is closely related to the need for security. Each person manifests the need for achievement not only so that he will stand well in the eyes of others but also for the satisfaction he gets out of his own accomplishment. A man may be a better golfer than those with whom he usually plays, yet he keeps trying to improve his own score. A person may be able to type ninety words per minute, yet the superior accomplishment usually results in a desire to be even better. A student may be the best in the class in algebra, but this typically does not cause him to cease working. There is a personal satisfaction in achievement which goes beyond that of social needs. A young child resists being dressed if he can somehow get into his shirt by himself, however twisted the final arrangement may be. The toy airplane a child may make by nailing or tying two pieces of board together proves often to be a more valued possession than an expensive toy bought at the best of stores. Some people seek achievement in athletic

activities, others in intellectual pursuits, while someone else seeks achievement in improved moral living, and may pursue it in the business world. The particular mode of achievement sought by a given person probably depends upon his talents and the environment in which he lives. But regardless of the form of the achievement that is desired, the desire is patent.

Failure to gain a sense of achievement has a debilitating effect on personality. The person who fails to accomplish a satisfactory "something" becomes a discouraged, inactive, and ineffective individual. He retires from the field of competition, he fails to respond to the stimulations which could result in personal growth. He becomes, in fact, a person who exists rather than lives. At best he is a burden to himself and at worst he is a mental case who is potentially or actually dangerous to society. Since the personality of an individual at the time of physiological maturity is a long time in the making, the first symptoms of inadequacy are likely to be manifest in the personalities of school children.

Fortunately, much is known already about ways in which a child's need for accomplishment can be answered. What remains to be done is to implement in the classroom all that is known. The first consideration is one that teachers have read about in practically all their professional books: the necessity for making provisions for individual differences. This means that the uniform routines which are largely characteristic of schools, the country over, must be modified in recognition of basic differences in the ability to achieve. Accordingly, talents other than the purely academic must be taken into consideration. All too frequently, some special phase of accomplishment is singled out for admiration—athletics, for instance—while achievements in art, writing, dancing, and academic superiority are ignored. The teacher, by being cosmopolitan in her interests, can do much to offset these imbalances. Another requisite, in view of these differences, is that teachers should avoid invidious comparisons—and there are no comparisons of individuals which are not invidious. Such exhortations as "See how well Mary does her arithmetic!" should never be heard. A given child should be evaluated in terms of how far he has traveled in a given time rather than in terms of his absolute status. Another factor, previously indicated in discussing the purposefulness of behavior, is the desirability of having immediate and intermediate goals as well as long-term objectives. Even at the high-school level, and certainly in preceding grades, persistent application is helped by being aimed at a series of immediately achievable goals rather than having to depend heavily on a hope of "passing" at the end of the year. Abstract symbols of achievement in the form of grades and marks may stimulate a few children, but many others find them meaningless. A special job well done, a personal curiosity satisfied, and a committee re-

sponsibility fulfilled might well constitute the immediate goals that would provide a more enduring kind of motivation. Experiments indicate that knowledge of progress is a factor which keeps curiosity alive. If children work at a task without knowing how they are getting along, their interest wanes more rapidly than if they can see or if they are told what progress they are making. This imposes upon the teacher the responsibility of reporting progress in a way that will have meaning and value.

The need for achievement might also be stated as the need for success. Success may be thought of in terms of absolutes, while achievement can readily be thought of in relative, or personal, terms. That is, one cannot feel that he has succeeded if he comes in last in a race; but having qualified for the race might justifiably give him a feeling of achievement. This may seem like splitting hairs, but it has some important implications for school practice. Because of differences in ability it is not possible for all to achieve at the same level; hence, one child should not feel that he is a failure because his work is not on a par with others. A child who is making progress in overcoming his handicaps should be made to feel that he is achieving; because there is a circular effect involved in levels of aspiration. That is, the degree to which one achieves determines the strength and endurance of activity directed toward a goal. Achievement or failure cannot be measured in terms of energy expended. It is in relation to one's level of aspiration. Most of us regret most keenly any prizes which we almost won; our greatest disappointments are felt when we put forth excessive effort to no avail. This situation imposes upon the teacher a double challenge. He must see to it, on the one hand, that goals are not too easily won and, on the other, that failure to achieve is not a consistent outcome for any one child. Two other factors which have an important effect upon individual levels of aspiration are (1) approval or praise offered by teachers and (2) the amount of prestige enjoyed by the teacher or the degree of rapport existing between teacher and pupil.

The Need to Be Independent. Dr. Alfred Adler, one of the outstanding leaders of the psychoanalytic viewpoint in psychology, places his major emphasis on the all-important driving power of need to overcome feelings of inferiority. We are born weak, helpless, and dependent; and life itself is largely a matter of compensating for this weakness and becoming an independent person. He regards the self-assertive impulse as the dominant driving force in life. It is an impulse that is subject to frustration from the environment and from the person's own feelings of insecurity. Thus, the need for independence is at once the force back of accomplishment and a cause for frustration and maladjustment. R. S. Woodworth, in evaluating Adler's viewpoint, asserts,

However true and adequate Adler's psychology may or may not be in the ultimate sense, it certainly embodies much proximate truth that is immedi-

ately applicable to life. . . . Especially in assisting children to master their problems, Adler's line of approach has proved its value, so that he has already won a position of influence in the educational field.⁵

The importance of the need for independence gives psychological support to the theory of democratic practices in education and especially to the wisdom of providing freedom for personal activity and development. If teachers can rid themselves of the notion that prescribed curriculums and imposed authority are the sole sources of developmental education, a big step toward capitalizing on the need for independence will have been taken.

It cannot safely be said that there is any particular period in life when the need for independence is most crucial. Parents may have allowed the child ample opportunity for developing appropriate feelings of independence, and elementary teachers may have made similar wise provisions; but in spite of this, the need for independence becomes no less compelling during adolescence. While this does not imply that growing children do not need direction, it does indicate that dictatorial procedures hinder symmetrical personality development. Teachers at all levels must allow students to share in group decisions, to have a voice in the determination of their personal objectives, to make mistakes, and to encounter widely the variety of experiences that will make them progressively more independent. Such procedures will implement the working of democracy by providing for mature and healthful individual personalities.

The Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, has published a bulletin *How Democratic Is Your School?*⁶ containing a check list which presents, in question form, many specific suggestions useful for implementing the need for independence. Ten questions have been selected for illustrative purposes:

Do students in your classes have a voice in determining the projects or problems on which they will work?

Do students in your classes share in evaluating what they have done?

Is the slow learner in your classes given opportunities to do something important which he can do relatively well?

When your students cooperatively plan an activity, do they carry out their agreed-upon assignments and responsibilities?

Do you admit to your students that you are not an authority on all questions arising in class?

Do your students show eagerness to participate in student self-government?

⁵ Robert S. Woodworth, *Contemporary Schools of Psychology*, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1931, p. 168. By permission of the publisher.

⁶ *How Democratic Is Your School?*, Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, 1949.

Does the student editor of your school paper or magazine have the freedom of the press?

Do students have opportunities to share in group solutions of school problems?

Do students have a fair opportunity to defend themselves against a teacher's charge of misconduct?

Are opportunities provided for students to discuss student council activities?

Not only do these questions provide suggestions for giving young people practice in democratic activity, but they also point the way toward that self-directed behavior which so firmly undergirds the mature personality which combines independence with cooperative endeavor.

FUNDAMENTAL SOCIAL NEEDS

The distinction between fundamental social needs and psychological needs is not sharp; each class of needs shades into the other so that there is some overlapping. Although some psychological needs have social implications, the needs discussed in this section are fundamentally social in nature. As with certain other needs, this classification has to do with well-rounded development rather than with needs which are requisite to life.

The Need to Be Loved. A more adequate statement of this need would be to say that every individual needs to love and be loved if he is to develop into a happy and productive person. Both the incoming and the outgoing phases of love must be considered. The importance of love is often given special emphasis by pediatricians in their counsels to parents and to prospective parents. "Tender-loving-care" (T L C) is a common prescription given by practical doctors, as well as by the "theorizing" psychiatrists. Love, we are told, cannot be simulated. Children know when they are genuinely loved and respond accordingly. It has been observed in controlled situations that children who had failed to make normal progress in weight and activity have, when they were cuddled, rocked, and talked to, made normal gains in weight, have become more active and seemed to take a smiling interest in things about them. Teachers frequently report that certain problem cases they encounter seem to stem from a lack of love in the home; and in some instances, have seen improved behavior on the part of the child when the parents were asked to relieve the pressure of crossness and abruptness and provide more time for giving attention to the child. Occasionally, someone who has been seriously ill is known to have recovered—when there seemed to be no hope from medical therapy—simply for the reason that he was determined to live because of his importance to his loved ones and their need of him.

It is difficult to assign, with accuracy, the outcomes of not being loved, since love itself is intangible. At least it may be worth while to go along

with the speculations of various scholars that lack of love may be a contributing factor to such conditions as drug addiction, alcoholism, vagrancy, and lack of drive toward accomplishment. Even though experimental data are lacking, empirical observations of children in school warrant the belief that truancy, lack of application, lassitude, and anti-social and asocial behavior are stimulated by a feeling of not being loved. If love is not what makes the world go round, at least it provides a lubricant to help life flow more smoothly.

The outgoing aspect of love—the need to love—is a reciprocal of the need to be loved. According to the degree to which one is loved there is the chance, though perhaps not the certainty, that he will develop the capacity to love. The person in whom this occurs has acquired one of the basic factors in personal mental health. It is this second aspect with which we are chiefly concerned, as practitioners of mental hygiene. The life of a person who cannot love, who is circumscribed by his own selfishness, can be likened to the orbit of a piece of chalk tied to a string. The confines of activity are limited, there is little chance for personal as well as social development, there is no prospect for that person's becoming emotionally mature.

In some respects, the most audacious of all the great insights that have come into the world was the apparently absurd conviction of Jesus of Nazareth that men must love one another. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." We can easily imagine the bewilderment—even the ribald laughter—of his hearers. A world that was still very far from reaching the level of universal justice could scarcely rise to the level of universal love.

In reality, this "new commandment" was not an absurd and arbitrary rule laid upon man from the outside. It was, rather, the most profound insight into man's nature that had yet been achieved. Today every psychiatrist would affirm its truth. Man is sound in psychological health to the degree that he relates himself affirmatively to his fellow men. To hate and to fear is to be psychologically ill.⁷

Teachers can help in the fulfillment of this need (and work toward the fulfillment of their own need to love) by maintaining a friendly and sympathetic atmosphere in the classroom. If they can learn by experience, they should realize that no one is perfect and that consequently shortcomings and deviations can normally be expected in their pupils. A great store of sympathy and kindness would grow out of a genuine understanding of children. This understanding can be based on the information that is contained in school records and medical reports, and on knowledge

⁷ H. A. Overstreet, *The Mature Mind*, New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1949, pp. 102-103. By permission of the publisher.

of home conditions and personal interests of the pupils gained through an analytical view of their activities and through conversing with them. There is a secret "alchemy" for the development of warm human relationships and that secret is *taking time*—time to know and understand.

A difficulty in showing affection toward children is that those who most need the affection are likely to create the impression that they do not want the attention of the teacher. These individuals, because of having been deprived of love in the home, tend to be suspicious and aloof. But they are the ones who most need to be drawn out by a teacher who can understand the problems of mental health and who wishes to help any who are experiencing difficulties. When love is being short-weighted in the home, it becomes all the more necessary for teachers to compensate for the lack by a patience and kindness which will seep through the hardened protective shell.

The Need for Recognition. This need is somewhat akin to the need to be loved but is less intimate and personal. It has to do with group prestige, fame, reputation, and even notoriety. Adults in the community and pupils in the school want to be "somebody." Everyone has the need for being enough like the group to fit into it harmoniously and, at the same time, to be different enough to merit distinction. Each person needs to feel that he is worth while, that he has something of value to give to others, and that, because he is noteworthy, others will seek his advice, aid, and companionship. This does not mean that one cannot afford to have any shortcomings but that, because there is something about him that merits approval, these shortcomings may be overlooked.

The practical outcome of recognition is that it provides an important source of motivation. That behavior which begets recognition tends to be repeated. We can see this in the everyday acts of babies in the home when they try to do again the things which were praised or laughed at by other household members. Recognition tends to give the individual a feeling of confidence in himself, thus providing an incentive for attacking new problems. Satisfaction of the need for recognition may come from socially undesirable behavior as well as from approved behavior. Young people in school who receive recognition for laudable achievement, for group contributions, and for improved knowledge are no less motivated to continue their actions than is the lad who is recognized because he defies school regulations or because he arouses turmoil through his excessive exhibitionism.

Some children who do not receive recognition for approved behaviors may, instead of "acting up," resort to excessive daydreaming, or may tend to retreat from competition and from group participation where their efforts are scorned or ignored. Studies of factors contributing to delinquency reveal that lack of recognition for achievement at school or

for importance in the home is such a factor in this deviant behavior. In fact, a number of the common defense mechanisms may easily have their roots in a thwarting of the need for recognition. It is worth bearing in mind, when considering not only this but other needs as well, that just as the symptoms for one kind of behavior may be multiple and varied, so too a single symptom may indicate a lack of different needs. Thus, discouragement, inactivity, shyness, and the like may be symptomatic of the unfulfilled need for love, achievement, or recognition.

Procedures which may be recommended for an approach to the fulfillment of the need for recognition are more specific than those mentioned with respect to the need for love. Teachers can praise meritorious successes as well as honest efforts that are made to achieve; they can also encourage the group to recognize and praise the work of members of the class. It is necessary to avoid blame for failure, especially when this is due to a lack of ability. Not only should such poorly advised and culpable devices as shame, sarcasm, and ridicule, or any other technique for humiliating a young person be avoided, but the one who tends to use them might well look to the state of his own mental health for an explanation of his behavior. Fortunately, the existence of individual differences, which so frequently presents difficulties to teachers, is an asset to the realization of the need for recognition. Sometimes it is sufficient to comment on, or in some way call attention to, the assets a person has, even though they may be some that are usually not rated as highly significant in the school—for example, neatness of dress, personal habits of cleanliness, considerate treatment of siblings, or regular attendance at some community function. At other times it may be necessary to encourage the young person to *develop* a specific asset, so that he will merit the admiration of the group. Another factor in teacher responsibility in this area, more vague but not less important, is the need to teach young people the meaning and importance of acceptable behavior. They must learn that healthful and desirable recognition is gained by means of socially oriented action rather than selfish and egocentric behavior. Moreover, this knowledge should come through experience of group activity. It cannot grow effectively out of the moralistic teachings of a class lecture.

The Need for Companionship. Man is often referred to as a gregarious animal. His need to associate with others, to belong to the group, to share in the blessings of companionship seems to be very deeply ingrained. The fact that there are hermits and recluses is not evidence that this need is not universal; rather, such individuals are thought to be maladjusted persons who have been unable to withstand some traumatic social experience or set of experiences. The basic character of the need is probably reflected in the fact that one of the most severe punishments possible is solitary confinement. Indeed, one of the punishments to be used effec-

tively for babies from the time they walk and talk is removal from the group. Many youngsters who will come back for more, when scolded or spanked, are restored quickly to conformity when social isolation is imposed on them.

Companionship is more than being physically with another person. It means associating with others in a purposeful situation. Its true meaning is made evident when we recall our own feelings of lonesomeness in a large city where we know no one, where we have not yet taken up a new job or are just passing the time while waiting for travel connections. Aside from economic advantages accruing from division of labor, companionship provides the opportunity for developing situations in which one may gratify his need to love and to be loved. It involves being a significant member of the group. Thus, companionship provides a substantial means of satisfying man's universal search for self-fulfillment and response and, ultimately, his quest for happiness.

The need for companionship, although not limited to the adolescent age, is frequently seen as a special problem during this phase of development. The adolescent, in trying to expand his social horizons beyond the immediate family group, strenuously seeks for attachment to his own generation. Understanding parents and teachers must seek a functional realization of this search on the part of adolescents. They must see the adolescent's desire for conformity in dress, opinions, and action as a healthy indication of a growing personality. They must carefully avoid hasty criticism of behaviors that do not meet the complete approval of adult wisdom.

The responsibility of the school does not cease with the mere assembling of numbers of youngsters of like age in the classroom. It must include some positive help in developing the techniques for getting along with one another. One of the first things that might well be emphasized is the teaching of etiquette—the inculcation of the techniques of courtesy. It can be assumed that learning the elements of courtesy will set up a positive frame of reference for a favorable psychology of suggestion; that is, acting courteously will help to develop sympathy, tolerance, and respect for others. Personal guidance, in the form of pointing out mannerisms and behavior that tend to alienate others, can do much toward developing the attributes that will make one a desirable companion.

Whatever can be done in the school to afford practice in democratic living will provide the most valuable aid to developing the kind of personality that will realize the need for companionship. Democracy is much more than a political technique; it is a moral and personality problem as well. What the school does toward encouraging practice in democratic procedures counts for more than the making of good citizens. It is a means of establishing wholesome mental health. Sharing responsibility,

pooling opinions, taking part in cooperative actions, and capitalizing on individual potentialities are opportunities for practicing the basic elements of companionship. One cannot work in groups without developing respect for the wisdom and talents of others. Anyone who joins in such work will learn the true meaning of equality and will see the outcome of cooperative endeavor. Just as freedom, equality, and justice are basic elements in the concept of democracy, so too are these attributes basic to the realization of the need for companionship.

SUMMARY

Human needs may be classified into three categories: (1) organic needs (2) needs which relate to various psychological satisfactions and (3) needs imposed by the social environment. Although some of these needs may not be requisite to life, they are all requisite to complete living, they are all fundamental to optimum mental health. The satisfaction of organic needs—food, moisture, protection from bruises and extremes of temperature—are necessary to provide the physical health that will provide the reservoir of strength that is needed in the fulfillment of the social and psychological needs. In fact, there is considerable evidence that the way in which organic needs are met determines the behavior of the individual, quite apart from his physical and social milieu—at least in some instances.

The need to be secure is a personal need with social implications. It has two important aspects, (1) that of the security provided by the care and affection of others and (2) that which relates to the individual's ability to meet and solve his own problems by means of his own skills. The need to manipulate and to satisfy curiosity is important, both because of the personal gratification derived and also because it stimulates the acquisition of experiences that will make the person psychologically secure. The need to achieve is likewise both a personal and a social need. It is personal in that it provides a stimulus for continuous personality development, and social in that through achievement one gains recognition. The need to be independent contains the stimulus which leads to that continuous adjustment that is required in an ever-changing world; but this independence must not be considered to be opposed to the freedom that is inherent in a democratically oriented society. Finally, tension-tolerance must be developed in everyone who is to achieve mental health. This can be done by each person's learning that there are *some* things that he can do and by his accepting the fact that he *cannot* reasonably expect to be best in everything he attempts.

Fundamental social needs include the need to love and to be loved, the need for recognition, and the need for companionship. The need to love means that one must be important and vital in the life and living of

at least certain other persons. It means that he must have a purpose for living—a place in a plan. The need to be loved indicates man's incompleteness; it reflects the fact that he is part, but an important part, of the scheme of living. The need for recognition and companionship are less intimate aspects of the need to love and to be loved.

None of these needs are automatically satisfied. Men must work for, or rather toward, their gratification. There are efficient and inefficient ways of implementing this work. The task of the school is to teach economical methods of working toward the realization of human needs—which when satisfied will ensure better mental health.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Are "needs" vital and indispensable to the continuance of life or would you hold that there is a continuous gradation between the insistency of various needs?
2. Distinguish between the idea of a need's being satisfied and "on the way to being satisfied."
3. Do you feel that people in old age need clearly defined and important objectives or purposes? What bearing does this have for your work as a teacher?
4. Would you think all needs are cyclical in nature in a manner similar to the need for rest and the need for activity?
5. Is sex an organic or a mental need? How would you suggest that better recognition be given this need, regardless of where it is classified?
6. Evaluate the concept of security which makes it important that the individual develop the ability to be independent.
7. Describe three or four situations a teacher could devise to stimulate and satisfy curiosity at the fourth-grade level. At the sophomore level in high school.
8. What can teachers do to help youngsters satisfy their need or desire to achieve? (Be specific.)
9. List a number of personality characteristics that might derive from a thwarted desire for achievement.
10. How does the need to be independent fit in with the theory of democratic practices in education?
11. Suggest a number of things that might be done by the teacher to improve a pupil's level of tension-tolerance.
12. Do you feel that the need for companionship is an innate response or a learned one? Why?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

CARROLL, HERBERT A., *Mental Hygiene*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1947. 329 pp.

This study of mental hygiene begins with the study of motivation. The author analyzes the needs and desires of humans (with particular stress on college stu-

dents) and indicates better ways of satisfying them. A chapter is devoted to each of the following needs: emotional security, mastery, status, and physical well-being.

HORNEY, KAREN, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1937. 299 pp.

Mental and emotional difficulties are not caused solely by individual experiences. The author holds that much present neuroticism is due to the kind of society in which we live. It is not an "either-or" matter. The culture works with (or against) the individual as he seeks to satisfy his needs for affection, acceptance, and sexual activity, and his quest for power and possession.

MENNINGER, KARL, *Love Against Hate*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1942. 311 pp.

The title of this book stems from the Freudian concept of polarity of behavior, i.e., two impulses working in opposite directions. Thus, the author says that man has a death instinct but also a desire to live. Man wants to construct but he also wants to destroy. He believes that understanding ourselves completely means to recognize that we want to hate as well as to love. Understanding this we can give our impulses positive direction.

SHERMAN, MANDEL, *Mental Hygiene and Education*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1934. 295 pp.

Mandel Sherman, M.D., Ph.D., feels that the teacher is the connecting link between the pupil and help from a psychiatrist. He describes the fundamental needs of people and what the results of denial are. Common defense mechanisms are described. Emphasis is placed on the determination of problems which are too difficult for the teacher and which should therefore be handled by the expert.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Make Way for Youth, Association Films, 35 West 45th St., New York 19. (22 min, BW, sd.)

The citizens of a community, young and old, are shocked into action by tragedy. Together they organize a youth program to break barriers between neighborhoods, races, and religions.

Overcoming Fear, Coronet Films, Inc., 65 East South Water, Chicago 1. (13 min, BW&C, sd.)

Courage is portrayed as an attitude that can be developed by overcoming specific fears. Shows how overcoming fears fosters the growth of a better all-round individual.

Unconscious Motivation, Association Films. (38 min, BW, sd.)

Demonstrates how hidden motives and repressed experiences can and do influence everyday thoughts, feelings, and actions. The film gives meaning to many of the psychoanalytic concepts that have found their way into educational theory and practice.

3

THE NATURE OF MALADJUSTMENT

It was emphasized in the previous chapter that adjustment or maladjustment is dependent upon the extent to which fundamental needs of humans are met or on the way to being met. Maximum welfare for young people will more likely be achieved if the home and the school cooperate in satisfying these needs. But if the needs are inadequately met in the home, the preventive and remedial role of the teacher becomes pivotal. The teacher must supply avenues for the satisfaction of needs that are thwarted in the child's out-of-school life. Hence, a summary of the basic causes of maladjustment is felt to be advisable, in order that teachers may realize more fully the genetic development of "problem behavior." It is not enough to suggest ready-made approaches to specific problems. Each case has its unique nuances. The teacher who wishes to be a beneficent influence for mental health should know that all deviant behavior stems from a *variety of causes*. This problem of understanding will be approached, in the present chapter, by citing an illustrative case study, by outlining the basic causes of maladjustment, and by describing a number of frequently observed symptoms.

THE TEACHER LEARNS ABOUT TOM

The following description, presented in the words of the classroom teacher who studied the case, illustrates many of the basic causes of maladjustment. The child concerned, as is true in a typical situation, manifested many symptoms of stress instead of resorting to but one disturbing behavior. Although the case concerns a first-grade pupil, the same basic causes and similar behaviors will be operative in upper-grade and secondary-school pupils.

"The first child whose name I learned this year was Tom. His behavior was different from that of others in the group. When we toured the school that first morning I explained the purpose and mechanism of the fire alarm. When the alarm was set off as an illustration, Tom rushed to me, threw his arms around my waist and hid his face in terror. It took some time to reassure him. The next day I showed a film. After the pic-

ture Tom told me he was going to be sick. I rushed him to the toilet and stood by while he tried without avail to vomit. When we talked of it afterward he told me that he was always sick when taken to a show. His medical certificate showed that he had a sinus allergy. The doctor who signed the report had remarked facetiously that the teacher would have to get used to it as did Tom. He snorted almost continuously despite my appeals for consideration of others. His mother informed me later that she had told him he would drive the teacher mad if he made a noise with his nose in school; and it seemed that he was having a good try at it. Children asked to have their seats removed from beside him and I did not blame them. Finally, I decided to ignore the habit but this required a great deal of fortitude.

"His behavior was most immature. He was unable to concentrate on any subject for even a short time. Even for stories he had no interest, and his writing and drawing papers were always a mass of scribbles. He was solitary in his play habits out of doors. He would spend his time racing up and down the playground, often asking the teacher on duty to see him run. In group play in the classroom the children complained constantly that he knocked over whatever they were building. He talked out uncontrolledly at all times and his speech was very difficult to understand. He did take one interest and that was when we talked of nature. He would bring to school grasshoppers, caterpillars, and other specimens and for these he showed understanding and great care in handling. He would not allow any of his classmates to approach his treasures too closely. When they did so a fight would result.

"When I gave the group an intelligence test I found that Tom was unable to concentrate on it and despite my encouragement he thumbed through the pages putting marks on them wherever his fancy dictated. There was one exception to this, however. The first page showed the recognition of lefts and rights in various positions. This page he did complete with a high score. I gave the test over, with him alone, a few days later. I found that under constant encouragement he finished it but the effort seemed to make him very tired. His indicated I.Q. was 92 and, as before, his score on the recognition of lefts and rights was high. I tested this capacity and he could tell me without difficulty which was his left and his right hand and on which side of a car the steering wheel was located.

"After about six weeks of school we interviewed all the parents of our first-graders. When Tom's mother came she revealed her anxiety about his adjustment. She was very apologetic and was very sensitive because her neighbors sought to compare Tom's progress with that of their own children. She told me that she had had two children who had died in infancy or early childhood and that she had then adopted Tom—against

the advice of her friends. About a year later she had had another baby who died in its first year. The following year she had a daughter, who is still alive and is two years younger than Tom.

"Tom did not talk until the age of three. At four and a half years his speech was still largely unintelligible to a stranger. As he grew older Tom became very impertinent to his mother. He treated his sister very badly, playing all manner of tricks on her—nipping, biting, and scratching her until she would be quite overcome. Tom's mother would take as much of this behavior as she could stand and then would chastise him soundly. Then it would appear as if he could not do enough to make amends. For a few days things would seem better and then the persecution would be renewed.

"His mother had tried to understand the situation. She had read books on how to bring up children correctly but had always found herself up against his cruelty toward his sister. She felt that she could not stand by and watch that and so she had usually resorted to chastisement. She had considered consulting a psychologist but had been discouraged by her husband, who preferred to shut his eyes to the situation in the hope that Tom would grow out of it.

"We carried on until November and by that time I realized that his I.Q. was higher than that indicated by the group test. He revealed this fact in many ways but he still refused to cooperate in our class lessons in any way. I decided to interview his mother again. I suggested to her that a psychologist could really help us to understand Tom's difficulties. She said she had been thinking of the matter herself and decided that she would make an early appointment. She came to school after her consultation to tell me of the result.

"Tom's I.Q. was revealed by the Stanford-Binet test to be 115 but he was suffering from a feeling of rejection, which had begun at a very early age. He had tried by various means to claim the attention of his mother, developing habits such as bed-wetting and refusal to eat the food served to him. The psychologist considered the allergy to be another bid for attention and certainly the worst of his snorting has since ceased.

"The treatment was to be a complete change in the attitude of the mother and she has worked hard to achieve this end. All punishment was to be done by the father. The sister was sent to a nursery school while Tom stayed at home in the mornings for some time and received his mother's undivided attention. In the afternoons he came to school. The situation improved almost from the very beginning. The habit of bed-wetting was discontinued almost at once. I felt encouraged to apply a little pressure in the field of learning. I began to insist that he remain in his seat and attempt to do a small part of what the others were doing. I found that he came to resent this treatment on my part and he began to

show it in various ways. Twice he wet the floor when asked to copy a bit of writing. At other times he would rise from his seat while I was working with another group, sharpen his pencil and poke the other children in the neck with it. He became involved in fights in which he appeared to be the aggressor. He would resort to biting and scratching until I felt that I had to spend the better part of the day keeping him out of trouble. In addition he began to steal little articles from my desk and the desks of the children. I realized that Tom was not yet ready to be asked to concentrate in any way.

"Matters at home, however, had continued to show slow improvement. I informed his mother of the latest development and told her that I thought it best to give Tom every freedom in class that did not interfere with the other children and that I would not expect any scholastic achievement from him until he seemed ready to work at his own desire. I let him spend most of his time for the next two months in our play corner. During this time he had the company of a new child who had come to our school from a very isolated area and who was also slow to mature socially. It was most disturbing to the lessons of others but the day came when the two of them tired of almost constant play and were glad to have a reading lesson. Tom's interest in reading has grown remarkably in the last two months. Last week in his achievement test he scored a 1.9 grade placement. He can count fairly well but still refuses to concentrate for long on anything that requires writing. I know he is capable of writing fairly well as I have seen when he wanted to please me specially; but for the most part he gives up after the first few words. Although I encourage him I do not make a point of his completing any given amount. He is now beginning to play a little better with the other children. He can take part in an organized game reasonably well and he will remain seated during class lessons. His mother has helped to increase his prestige with the other children by supplying little treats for the class in Tom's name.

"I have been considering the matter of his promotion to the second grade. Although he still has not developed good working habits the progress which he has made in reading leads me to believe that they may develop shortly. I also know that he is eager to go on to the second grade and I feel that he should be allowed to continue at his own rate without any repetition of what he has already learned."

This account of Tom shows many of the basic causes of maladjustment and also indicates the variety of behaviors that may result from disturbing influences. His feeling of insecurity was revealed in his conduct in novel situations. He ran to the teacher for physical protection and revealed his anxiety by becoming ill at the showing of a film. According to the psychologist's report, his allergy represented an attempt to run away from

what, to him, was an unpleasant situation. His inability to concentrate reflected in his aggressiveness toward his sister and toward his classmates. A conflict in motives is revealed in the teacher's account of the mother's discipline, "Then it would appear as if he could not do enough to make amends." Conflict is further indicated in his sporadic attempts to please the teacher by doing his work—attempts that were not continued assiduously.

The application of sound mental hygiene principles is also illustrated. Both the mother and the teacher were making concerted efforts to understand Tom. Both of them had to learn that it was necessary to accept Tom as he was, in spite of his objectionable behaviors. There are indications that it is necessary for the adults in Tom's life to learn to exercise patience with the slow process of growth. There is an intellectual acceptance of this on the part of the teacher, as is shown in the concluding words, "I feel that he should be allowed to continue at his own rate," but the emotional acceptance is a matter of concern for her as for all teachers.

One other aspect of Tom's case is worthy of mention. Teachers have often asked the writer how it is that the cases they read about all turn out so beautifully. Reflecting on their own experiences, they say that they cannot report such complete success. No doubt, many of the cases cited in the literature were described because they were successful. However, most teachers are likely to find themselves in situations such as is described above, in which rehabilitation is not complete and there is still work to be done, although progress has been made.

SOME CAUSES OF MALADJUSTMENT

Frequently the fact is emphasized that all behavior is caused. There are always reasons for the individual's behaving as he does. Sometimes these causes are obvious, sometimes they can be located through analytic study, and sometimes they are so obscure that it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the source of difficulty. In this section, some of the more common causes of maladjustment will be examined, with a view to their understanding and more successful treatment.

(*Feelings of Insecurity.* A feeling of insecurity may be described as an attitude or conviction on the part of the individual that he is unwanted, that he is rejected by those with whom he comes in contact, and that there are factors in his environment that make the world a threat to his safety and well-being.) The reader has no doubt seen the evidence of such feelings in either his classmates or his pupils or both. (High-school pupils who hesitate to state their own opinions on matters for fear of condemnation or ridicule, children who reveal a dread of launching on some new project, and adults who are tense when meeting people are giving evidence of feelings of this kind.) Such an individual does not "feel at home"

in any situation. (He waits for others to chart the way and, even then, may hesitate to follow for fear of being criticized. Many of the pupils who refuse or hesitate to recite, even though their information may be adequate, are revealing a common manifestation of feelings of inferiority.) The above-cited case of Tom indicates such feelings at many points, but we may add to the foregoing list the loss of appetite and restlessness (his inability to concentrate). Enuresis and poor sleep habits may accompany feelings of insecurity, but it must be remembered that such symptoms as are described may also be indicative of other deprivations of basic needs.

It is probable that the great majority of feelings of insecurity are to be found in the child's early years. (Normally, one's parents) gladly supply his organic needs. They (feed him, keep him warm and dry, and comfort him in times of stress. They rejoice in his successes and sympathize with him in his failures. They show their approval by praising his activities.) They find in many instances evidences of his vast superiority to other children. (The consequence is that he knows he is loved, wanted, and accepted, and he grows up feeling secure.

On the other hand, it sometimes happens that the child is rejected. The parents feel that he was born at an inopportune time, they feel that caring for a child interferes with their own enjoyment of life, or they may feel that he is unworthy of them as their child when they compare him with the beauty, intelligence, and vigor of other babies. Often the parents recognize these feelings and their basic feeling of rejection for the child is overcompensated. They overaccept the child, they force themselves to fondle and praise him, but the child is not fooled and he still senses the rejection.)

(Factors in the etiology of feelings of insecurity) which are a continuation of the above and may persist as active influences in the grade- and high-school years (are) numerous and widely recognized. These might include (harsh demands and remarks; severe and sometimes cruel punishment; demands which are inappropriate with the child's developmental level; lack of sympathy in times of illness, pain, or stress; and even direct statements that the child is a hampering influence. Other continuing influences are bickering and quarreling of the parents; a desire on the part of insecure parents to compensate through the child; or rejection by the larger community because of race, religion, or mode of dress.)

Obviously the removal of feelings of insecurity is a long-time process starting with an understanding of the basic causes. (Therapy should, of course, begin in the home,) but where this is not possible the case should still not be deemed impossible of improvement. There are things that can be done in the school which will get at some of the fundamental causes. (Teachers may take an interest in the child that will give him the assurance that there is someone who is interested in him and on whom he can

depend. Opportunities for giving deserved praise should be actively sought. The reprehensible practices of shaming, ridiculing, and making personal criticism should be carefully avoided. Opportunities for the release of pent-up feelings should be provided. These might well include drawing, writing, working with tools, untrammelled play, and personal interviews in which the teacher is careful to avoid any moral shock or expression of disgust or surprise. Perhaps above all, there should be an encouragement for the child to develop personal skills that will replace his feelings of insecurity with a well-founded feeling of competence. It makes little difference what these skills are, whether they be academic, artistic, athletic, social, or concerned with the maintenance of personal appearance. Just as the basic causes of insecurity tend to spread into many areas of behavior, so do the feelings of confidence generated in a specific area tend to spread to other fields of activity.

(Feelings of Inferiority) Alfred Adler originally formulated a concept that is at present widely used in an attempt to understand deviating behavior.¹ Briefly, his idea was that a powerful motivational force in the life of an individual was to compensate for real or imagined deficiencies or defects. Beginning early in life when the individual is entirely dependent on others for all his satisfactions, there is a struggle for power, independence, and superiority. Inability to satisfy this desire for power and independence over a period of time results in what is popularly known as the "inferiority complex."² Whether or not we subscribe to the belief that this drive to power is a natural part of the motivation of every individual, it is evident that there are many who suffer to a hampering degree from a lack of confidence, marked self-consciousness, and feelings of incompetence. A well-adjusted person, no doubt, lacks confidence and is self-conscious in some situations; but in a maladjusted person evidence of feelings of inferiority are shown in a major-portion of his behavior. Thus, (this feeling varies in degree from normal behavior to marked deviation. In the extreme case, symptoms of the feeling of inferiority are many, including the conviction that others are criticizing him, the tendency to avoid meeting or being with others, the handicap of easily becoming embarrassed, projection on others of his own deficiencies or errors, and an inclination to avoid novel situations. In many cases inferiority may be indicated by compensating behavior in the form of exhibitionism or of sporadic attempts to dominate some of the situations in which the subject finds himself. Attention-getting behavior on the part of school children—making noises with the mouth, feet, or fin-

¹ Alfred Adler, *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1924.

² The terminology is perhaps too popular, because many people who use the term do not understand its psychological meaning.

gers; making faces or grimacing; coughing; pestering others; or acting disobedient—may in many instances give evidence of this hampering feeling.

The causes of feelings of inferiority are not so easily attributed to specific factors as are some of the other evidences of maladjustment. Instead of being related to specific inabilities or real defects, the feeling is vague and general. However, specific inabilities or real defects may, in some cases, be the origin of a feeling that diffuses into all areas of life, though it must be remembered that many children with inabilities and with defects do not suffer these feelings. It is safe to say that it is not the liability but rather the view that is taken of it that is significant as a contributing cause. If the parents of a crippled child or one who lacks beauty give evidence of disappointment, then the feeling finds fertile ground for development. The child must be given the impression that he is wanted and accepted, just as in the case of building up feelings of security. Whether or not the child has some handicap, it is necessary for him to be accepted. It is imperative that unfavorable comparisons between him and his peers and siblings should be avoided. Disapproval of the child expressed in crossness, nagging, shaming, or scolding gives impetus to the development of feelings of inferiority.

Of especial importance is it for secondary-school teachers to realize that adolescence is a critical time in the development of that handicapping emotional state. This does not imply that adolescence naturally and normally is characterized by the tendency; but unless the growing person has been intellectually and emotionally prepared for the onset of puberty (with information included as to the wide differences in age when the physical changes take place), he or she may be confused and disturbed by *phy* changes in contour, voice, the development of breasts and genitals, and the growth of hair in the pubic areas. To these physical changes must be added the problems of entering into a larger social environment and the liabilities imposed by society. Specifically, the adolescent is enlarging his world of acquaintances, the world of his activities, and the world of economic responsibility. Although his body is of mature size or nearing mature size, he is still regarded as a child. Laws and mores prevent his entering the working world, they prevent his marriage, they prevent his taking part in pursuits in which he sees adults engaged. Adults can see that all these restrictions are working out to his ultimate advantage, but to the adolescent himself they often seem to be an indication of personal inferiority. He is likely to point out disturbing comparisons. He tells his parents about *some* of his peers who have greater freedom. He points out instances of *some* of his pals who have quit school. He describes the jobs that *some* of his friends have been privileged to take. The situation of parents and teachers is made more difficult by the fact that to an extent he is

justified in his arguments. Yet unless the problem is objectively and intelligently handled, the outcome may be an intensification of the adolescent's feelings of inferiority.

Plans to remedy a feeling of inferiority follow the lines suggested by a study of its causes. The adolescent needs to be accepted warmly as the person he is. Interpersonal comparisons should be strictly avoided. When some illustrious example is pointed out, this not only intensifies the feeling of inferiority but tends to arouse hostility toward the example. Positive incentives, such as praise and reward for effort and unique accomplishments, should replace the negative incentives of ridicule, scolding, and threats. Special attention should be devoted to finding some honest reason for expressing appreciation and approbation. Many of the measures which are recommended in other parts of this volume and which are in line with positive mental hygiene principles can be effected in school life. These would include scaling schoolwork to the abilities and background of the individual student; seeing to it that there is a more equitable distribution of the experiences of success and failure; seeking the development of skills and knowledges that will offer well-founded reasons for the establishment of self-confidence; giving the developing child opportunities for self-determination that are in accord with his capacity, instead of allowing the teacher to drift into the easy course of domination.

An approach to difficult problems of adolescence is suggested elsewhere. Here let the thought be emphasized that group discussion among adolescents will help them to understand their common problems much more clearly than will an inspiring lecture by an adult. Such group discussions can lead them to see that the problems they felt were so individual and personal are shared in some manner by their peers. Learning that others of their age are having similar difficulties will help them to avoid a feeling of personal inferiority. As a matter of fact, adolescents—if they are but given a chance to exercise their ability—should and frequently do have the ability to perceive problems in a much more mature light than was formerly thought possible.

Feelings of Hostility. Feelings of hostility are a major factor in some types of maladjustment. Neurotic anxiety springs in large measure from hostile impulses of various kinds.³ The individual senses the injustice of his own feelings of hostility and is concerned lest his impulses be revealed in action. The result is a tension that prevents his functioning smoothly and efficiently. In young children hostility is directly expressed in behaviors that are irritating to parents and teachers. Though it is probable that, in some instances, a child's striking or pinching a younger sibling is

³ Karen Horney, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1937, p. 63.

merely a matter of experimentation or curiosity, it is also possible that these actions may be an expression of hostility. Children who are excessively aggressive on the playground, resorting to name calling and fighting, may be giving evidence of the existence of such feelings. Cruelty to animals, which in some cases is due to inexperience, may at times represent a somewhat disguised manifestation of hostility, the perpetrator knowing that the animal is helpless to resist. Hostility may be further disguised by attacks on inanimate objects. Thus, the destruction of school property (writing on desks, carving initials, breaking windows) is often an indication of hostility which the individual himself does not recognize.⁴

The causes of feelings of hostility are not dissimilar to those back of other feelings which hamper facile adjustment. The treatment the child receives at the hands of adults is a prime factor in the explanation of these feelings. Parents whose own insecurity and selfishness make it difficult for them to accept the responsibility of parenthood cannot show the warm affection that might serve as an antidote for such maldevelopment. Preference for a child other than the subject and comparisons that belittle the latter are known to generate feelings of hostility. Lack of consistency in the treatment of a child is considered by some psychiatrists to be more harmful than treatment that is consistently harsh or unjust. Parents who resist the child's natural, and admirable, desire to grow up may arouse hostility, even though the resistance is well intentioned as a protective measure. Interference with the choice of companions, laughing at immature choices of activities or possessions, and criticism of athletic, social, or academic interests are ways of generating hostile feelings.)

Certainly, a futile way of treating feelings of hostility is to reflect the behavior in kind. Yet this is all too often the way in which the phenomenon is approached. There seems to be a conviction on the part of both parents and teachers that treatment should consist of making the hostility so unpleasant that it will no longer be expressed. While they may be successful in inhibiting the expression—often it may merely be a matter of delaying the expression until it breaks forth in some criminal behavior—the underlying feeling remains, even in exaggerated form, as a continuing source of tension.

The positive approach is suggested by the underlying etiological factors. There must, of course, be that acceptance which has been so frequently mentioned. Opportunities for the indirect expression of the feelings through athletics, art activities, and personal interviews can be recommended. Appreciation of the individual's actions, expressed through praise and encouragement, will help to develop the self-approval that

⁴ It is worth reemphasizing that the nature of feelings of insecurity, inferiority, and hostility is such as to force upon the teacher the realization that the causes of behavior must be known before attack upon the symptoms can be successful.

makes hostility as a defense unnecessary. There should be an attempt to give the growing person a chance to make his own choices of companions, activities, and interests. Perhaps, above all, there should be the opportunity for the child to associate with parents and teachers who do not look upon his behavior as an attack upon their own integrity.

Feelings of Guilt. Closely allied to feelings of insecurity and feelings of inferiority is the feeling of guilt. These are all indicative of the individual's dim self-evaluation. Experienced teachers know these persons as those who appear to be "conscience stricken" in regard to ordinary behaviors. The feeling is expressive of a marked fear of displeasing or offending others.

Evidences of feelings of guilt are seen in such behaviors as self-condemnation—in which the individual believes, and sometimes expresses the conviction, that he has done something shameful, sinful, or disgusting. Sometimes the subject, by denying himself simple pleasures, will punish himself for the wrongdoings that he attributes to himself. Evidences of guilt feelings may also be seen in the anticipation of condemnation by his peers or by adults. While not all instances of projection (blaming others for one's own errors or shortcomings) may be attributed to guilt feelings, there are instances in which guilt is the motivating factor.

The causes of feelings of guilt are similar to the causes of other feelings which lead to maladjustment. Sharp criticism and repeated condemnation certainly are contributing factors. Belittling comparisons may cause the individual to feel that he is unworthy. Accidents involving injury to others for which the subject receives continued blame are known to have nourished feelings of guilt. To these ill-advised methods of dealing with children must be added two other items that contribute toward generating this handicap. One is the attitude on the part of parents, which is reflected in their treatment of children, that sex and genital exploration are shameful. If the child is shamed, slapped, and scolded for simple sex explorations, there is likely to develop an abnormal curiosity which, because of its mystery, becomes the more compelling. Despite the fact that he shares the feeling that it is sinful or shameful to handle the genitals, he continues the practice—only to suffer guilt feelings because of his "weakness." The problem is intensified at the adolescent level if ill-founded stories about feeble-mindedness and insanity resulting from such manipulation are heard. The other factor is an exposure to religious teaching which emphasizes fear, sin, and retribution. Though these teachings seem to have diminished in popularity in recent years, there is evidence that they are not entirely extinct.

Remediation of guilt feelings may be so difficult a problem as to require the aid of a psychiatrist. However, certain preventive and prophylactic measures can be recommended. Expression of a liking and respect

for the individual is paramount. (There should be an attempt through kindly interview to get him to understand his own motives, assets, and admirable qualities.) Discussion with understanding adults can help the child to see that he is not unlike others. Realization that one is, after all, like his neighbors is a tremendous asset in the removal of feelings of guilt—as it is in overcoming other hampering feelings. It is obvious that a more objective teaching in regard to sex is necessary. Genital exploration is a normal, *and passing*, phase of development. If the child's growth is not arrested by ill-advised teachings, the exploration will cease. (It is encouraging to note that children in large numbers are being taught that sex development is an indication of approach to adulthood.) (Religious teachings that present positive factors, instead of fear and punishment, are advisable. Emphasis on love, service to others, and more complete self-realization will serve to concentrate attention on strength rather than weakness. Feelings of guilt do not arise suddenly or from one event. They are the result of constant and repeated pressures. Consequently, remediation must of necessity involve the slow process of growth, which demands patience on the part of the adult and the avoidance of repeated condemnations of any sort.

Conflicts. A word that is much bandied about and which warrants some explanation is conflict. In a world where individual freedom of choice is both an ideal and a characteristic there are bound to be frequent times when different courses of action are opposed. Thus, everyone who is faced with the need to make a choice experiences a degree of conflict. When the state of indecision is temporary and when the choice is relatively unimportant to the individual, the conflict is not serious—it will not lead to a deep feeling of frustration, which contributes to maladjustment. But it sometimes happens that the conflict is not resolved; the alternatives remain as a stress-provoking condition. In fact, the continuance of a problem situation, with no release of the emotions involved, causes an accumulation of tensions that become increasingly provoking and maladjustive. It is this continued state of conflict—the unresolved problem, the accumulation of tensions—to which the psychologist refers when he speaks of conflict.

Seeds for the propagation of conflict are sown when children are asked to make decisions that are too difficult for them in terms of their maturity. For instance, a father who rewards his son for a report of good behavior at the end of the day by romping, telling a story, or by giving a candy bar may ask, "Have you been a good boy today?" The child remembers that he had broken a glass when he tried to help his mother wipe the dishes and that she had called him a bad boy. The decision to tell the truth or to be deprived of the reward arouses conflict. Of course, one such occasion is of little consequence, but the situation repeated day

after day may become the source of conflict. School children are faced with a similar problem when the teacher asks for information the giving of which the individual feels would be a betrayal of confidence in his peers. The more highly developed the pupil's social responsibility, the greater the conflict he will suffer. The adult, as well as the youngster, is faced with numberless situations that may involve conflict. For example, the desire to be a friend and companion to his children may oppose his conviction that devotion to his work will win security for them. In all these examples, it must be remembered that the particular problem is of less significance in the generation of conflict than is repeated or continued occurrence.

The conflicts thus far described are conscious and recognized. Another aspect of conflict involves the kind that is unconscious. In this, the individual does not recognize the nature of his dilemma. A common example is the phenomenon of ambivalence—the existence of opposed feelings for the same person. Thus, a child may both love and hate his parents. The prohibitions that they place upon him block the satisfaction of some of his desires. The attempt to act as he pleases results in punishment and retaliation, which provokes hate and hostility. This may be combined with a fear that he will be deserted by the parents. Yet there remains the knowledge that they do care for him and his needs. This situation is, of course, not completely realized or verbally described. It is an unconscious conflict.

Unconscious conflict may arise also as the outcome of some remote experience. An unpleasant experience involving pain or fright may have occurred so long ago that there is no distinct memory of it, yet the residue remains in the form of some persistent fear or dread. Fear of closed places, fear of animals or of insects may have been generated by specific events now forgotten. Yet the fear of insects may make the study of biology a conflict situation, in that there is a tendency to avoid contact or reference to them, in spite of a desire to study a prescribed subject or take a course that some of one's peers find stimulating.

The resolution of deep-seated conflict may be a problem for psychological consultants or psychiatrists. It is, nevertheless, justifiable to hope that some conflicts may be avoided, some may be mitigated, and some may become bearable if positive mental hygiene principles are applied. Acceptance of the child, forgiveness for errors, frank and objective discussion, and an attempt to understand the uniqueness of each individual will constitute forward steps.

EVIDENCES OF UNWHOLESOME ADJUSTMENT

The foregoing section, *Some Causes of Maladjustment*, attempts to describe some of the things that may go wrong with a child's adjustment.

Children who deviate to such an extent that they become problems for parents and teachers are likely to be facing one or more of the basic difficulties indicated—to *some degree*. In this section some of the evidences of maladjustment will be examined, with the aim in mind of giving teachers a better understanding of what is meant by psychological ill-health.

The Danger of Labels. Unfortunately, some adults feel, it seems, that if the behavior of a child can be named, the struggle for improvement is almost won. If we can name the behavior rationalization, projection, introjection, seclusiveness, or selfishness, or fasten some other neatly defined label upon it, we still have the problem of discovering the specific cause for that behavior in a particular individual. In a way, medical practice has a much easier road to travel. If a child's illness is diagnosed as being mumps or measles, the doctor knows what caused the difficulty. He knows, too, the precise treatment that should be administered. But a symptom of maladjustment in the psychological realm is not so revealing. It may be perfectly clear that a child is projecting his difficulties on others; but the reason why he hit upon projection, rather than upon shyness, as an escape or relief from his problem is not clear; nor is it evident what "germ of discontent" has invaded his private world. The label is only the beginning. Next steps involve the investigation of possible sources of difficulty. Furthermore, since individuals differ in their reaction to specific stimuli, it is necessary to know how the individual *feels* about his problem. In short, the knowledge of objective environmental factors does not of necessity solve the problems involved in giving help to the psychologically ill person. Ability to name the symptoms and to evaluate their seriousness must be combined with a curiosity about what they may represent to the individual.

Seclusiveness. Although, a number of years ago, teachers were likely to view seclusiveness or timidity with favor (because it did not interfere with smooth classroom functioning), there are indications that today they are coming to share the belief of psychiatrists that it is a rather serious indication of maladjustment. The reason for regarding seclusiveness as a serious symptom can be seen from its definition. It is a withdrawing from the world (especially, the social milieu) so as to avoid defeat and disappointment. The seclusive individual has accepted defeat and resigned himself to his fate. It should be remembered, however, that this symptom is, in itself, an attempt at adjustment (albeit an unsuccessful one in terms of long-time adjustment). It is serious, too, because the underlying tensions are unresolved and unexpressed and hence likely to lead to still more serious deviations of conduct at a later time. Thus, there is good reason why the classroom teacher should be concerned with this manifestation, even though it does not interfere with classroom procedures.

Another significant consideration in viewing and dealing with the phenomenon of seclusiveness has to do with individual differences. It is quite likely that not all individuals *should* portray the same degree of extroverted, outgoing conduct. Some pupils may be perfectly well adjusted yet give the appearance of shyness and timidity. It could be that in a particular situation they just feel that they have no special contribution to make and do not see any necessity for pushing themselves forward just to make themselves heard.

How, then, do we judge the seriousness of seclusive behavior? Two answers are pertinent. One is that the pervasiveness of timidity should be studied. If the child is timid in all situations, if he cannot contribute even though he has something to give, and if he resists all advances, these are indications that the symptom is serious. The second factor has to do with the coexistence with other symptoms. If the only indication of possible difficulty is shyness, there is reason to regard it as being of minor importance. If, on the other hand, shyness is combined with nail biting, stuttering, lack of attention, or sullenness, it may be regarded as needing investigation. This is the attitude taken by psychologists when they refuse to interpret specific behaviors without first knowing the individual and his accompanying actions.

When the degree and the nature of seclusiveness are judged to be abnormal or bordering on the abnormal, remedial steps are in order. First, there must be a search for specific causes which will in themselves suggest corrective measures. Second, the general prophylactic and therapeutic measures—accepting the child, helping him to build skills and knowledges, seeing to it that he enjoys some measure of success, and avoiding force—may well be applied.

Aggressiveness. This symptom, like any others discussed, is more or less serious according to the degree of its development. It is much more likely than the others to catch the attention of the teacher, because of its disturbing nature. In fact, teachers often consider it one of the more serious problems of conduct, although it is probably less serious than seclusiveness because it represents an active attempt on the part of the individual to compensate for his frustrations. In other words, to overcome seclusiveness, behavior must be both started *and* directed, whereas, in the remediation of aggressiveness, all that is necessary is to direct behavior into more constructive channels.

The fundamental cause of aggression lies in feelings of insecurity, and specialists agree that redirection of the behavior is much better than any attempt to repress it.⁵ Yet the latter course is the one all too frequently

⁵ Norma E. Cutts and Nicholas Moseley, *Practical School Discipline and Mental Hygiene*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941, p. 143.

pursued by teachers. There is a tendency to punish or shame the "offender." In view of the nature of the conduct, the desirable course is a difficult one, because it depends upon finding occasions to give appropriate praise. One teacher solved the problem of aggressiveness in a given case by giving the boy numerous leadership responsibilities. He was made the custodian of play equipment and given the stewardship of the classroom. She indicated that it would be better if he secured cooperation instead of trying to control by force, and she praised him when his conduct merited approval.

Aggression may actually be stimulated by repressive discipline.⁶ The insecurity generated by threats and fear of consequences manifests itself in fighting, quarrelsomeness, and destruction when the individual is not under the immediate supervision of the feared person. Since such outbursts seem to challenge the authority and prestige of the teacher, the natural response on his part is one of hostility. This, however, merely aggravates the situation. It becomes obvious, then, that the recommended attitude must be one of understanding, friendliness, and patience.

Rose H. Alschuler suggests that the constructive approach to aggressiveness and its related symptoms, cruelty and destructiveness, requires one fundamental change rather than a variety of changes.⁷ This one change consists of seeing to it that the fundamental needs of the child are adequately met. No doubt, this is a large order, but it acknowledges the need for approaching personality problems in terms of understanding the individual child and of having patience with the slow processes of growth. Obviously, the worst possible approach is the seemingly natural one of responding in kind.

Truancy. Studies of the relationship of truancy to delinquency lead to the belief that truancy is a cause of delinquency. Actually, of course, the truancy is an indication of maladjustment that may become progressively worse until it reaches the stage of delinquency. It is now generally recognized that truancy is one kind of predelinquent behavior, a precursor or warning that more serious maladjustment will ensue unless the disturbing situations in the child's life can be lessened.

Two cases of delinquency in the primary grades will serve to show the variety of causes which might be involved. One lad with a Stanford-Binet I.Q. of more than 135 was found to be absenting himself from school because, in his words, "They just go over the same old stuff." He avoided the boredom of school by what would seem to be a still more boring occupation. He hid under the high porch and steps of his home and read and played by himself. His father consulted a psychologist, who

⁶ See Chapter 8.

⁷ Rose H. Alschuler in Paul A. Witty and Charles E. Skinner (eds.), *Mental Hygiene in Modern Education*, New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1939, p. 105.

recommended some books for him to read and suggested that the father visit the teacher, to see if more stimulating work could be given to the lad. The teacher was helpful and saw to it that the boy was given work to do that would more nearly challenge his abilities. This was an easy solution, because the boy was capable of working by himself and needed only to have appropriate materials provided. The other case involved a boy who was slow in his academic work but who happened to have manipulative ability. His teacher had deprived him of play materials in the hope of stimulating him to give more attention to reading. This boy was more active in seeking entertainment than was the one described above. He traveled about various parts of the city. Help, in his case, consisted of the teacher's removing some of the pressure to do academic work and permitting him more opportunity to construct. When class projects permitted, she let him help build benches, stools, light stands, and the like, while the other youngsters were given the roles of actors, ushers, and musical entertainers.

Other factors contributing to truancy may include repressive disciplinary procedures which the child seeks to avoid. Schoolwork which is meaningless in the student's eyes is known to be the explanation in many cases. Fear of failure will keep some children from school because they do not seem to realize that absence will only increase the certainty of failure. Youngsters in the upper grades and in high school may avoid school because they feel that their clothes are laughed at by their peers. As is indicated in the chapter on adolescent needs, the emotional pain caused by having ill-fitting or unpopularity designed clothing is sometimes quite acute. Closely allied to this feeling is that occasioned by being a member of some minority religious or racial group.

The cases cited may seem to indicate that the solution of the maladjustment manifested in truancy is relatively simple. Typically, this is not the case. Numerous contributing factors are usually involved. This suggests that it is mandatory for the teacher to learn as much as possible about the truant. Efforts should be made to cultivate friendship, not only to make the school atmosphere more inviting but because it will be possible through such friendship to get at the feelings of the individual child. Obviously, an effort should be made to make use of any of the particular interests the pupil has in the ongoing work of the class, so that he may be an active partaker. Since some of the factors contributing to truancy are found in home conditions, a visit to the home is usually necessary. These visits should emphasize the worth of the child, because of the tendency of parents to rationalize their own position and to condemn the child. The need for kindly treatment and complete understanding is reflected in the lessening tendency to have "truant officers" and the increasing use of personnel counselors, among whose duties is that of dealing with truancy.

Tattling. Tattling is one of the irksome and baffling problems with which a teacher has to deal. In the first place, it is difficult to define. Jennie's report that "Frankie pushed me" or that "Sue took my pencil" certainly seems to be tattling and should probably be temporarily ignored; but this seems less likely with recurring reports of the destruction of school property or the stealing of what belongs to another (though judgment in the latter case may vary with the amount or value of the articles involved).

(Suppose, however, that the tattling is chronic and characteristically involves inconsequential matters.) Then remedial measures are in order. Temporarily ignoring the tattling is recommended, though this does not mean neglecting a search for the causes of the behavior. If tattling is obnoxious, it certainly should not be rewarded by being given recognition, but an attempt to supply the indicated need should be made. Tattling is a bid for attention, so efforts should be directed toward finding some legitimate reason for giving the needed consideration. It has been shown that the child seeks and should find the teacher's favor, but the esteem of the teacher should be warranted if it is to build good habits in the child. Punishment and shaming are obviously ill-advised methods of treatment, since they involve a further destruction of the pupil's security. As is the case with other problems of conduct, the approach to tattling involves an effort to understand the individual and an over-all improvement of his milieu.

Other Evidences of Maladjustment. There are other evidences of maladjustment, such as selfishness, tantrums, and the chronic breaking of regulations; but they are symptoms and the consideration and treatment of them are very like those indicated for various symptoms in the foregoing discussion. Other similar problems are dealt with in Chapter 11, Personality Problems in the Classroom.

SUMMARY

✓ When fundamental needs are not met to the satisfaction of the individual, the condition is reflected in many different kinds of objectionable behavior. Sometimes these evidences are temporary and occur in a general context of good behavior. Sometimes the evidences are chronic and several indications of maladjustment are noted in the behavior of one child. The solution of the problem involves, in general, a better understanding of the individual and a concerted effort to bring about over-all improvement in his environment.

Basic causes of maladjustment are such experiences as feelings of insecurity, feelings of inferiority, feelings of hostility, feelings of guilt, and conflicts of ideals and actions. These basic causes of maladjustment are themselves, in turn, caused by lack of fulfillment of the need to be accepted or to be recognized as an individual of worth, by repressive disci-

pline in home and school, and by a thwarting of the need to accomplish and to be independent. Moral standards which are too difficult for the individual to comply with in terms of his maturation, as well as invidious comparisons with siblings and other children, are known to be powerful factors in the production of maladjustment.

Specific evidences of basic causes of maladjustment are numerous. Representative examples include such manifestations as seclusiveness, extreme aggressiveness, truancy, and tattling. The fallacy of labeling conduct with a technical name is indicated by the fact that treatment for each kind of behavior is strikingly like that for other kinds. Each child must be understood in terms of his particular background, abilities, and interests, and in terms of his own view of the situation in which he functions. Although mental hygiene cannot be viewed as a panacea for these evidences of maladjustment (because it offers no simple solution), it is in the application of the many principles of mental hygiene that the avoidance and remediation of maladjusted behavior resides.)

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. What would you consider to be the basic factors underlying the maladjusted behavior portrayed in Tom's behavior?
2. Have some experienced teacher describe some difficult case with which she has had to deal. Have as many conditions described as possible but have the remedial steps that were taken omitted. After discussion by the class, compare with the measure instituted by the teacher.
3. Do you detect any weakness in the approach used by the mother or the teacher in their attempt to help Tom?
4. Describe some individual you have known who seems to give evidence of feelings of inferiority. Suggest some possible causes for the feeling.
5. Do you agree with Adler's hypothesis that everyone is born with a feeling of inferiority and that life consists of an attempt to compensate for the feeling?
6. Would you agree with the teacher who says that she tries as much as possible to ignore fighting among her boys because she feels that it is a good way for them to get rid of their hostile feelings?
7. Will attempts to overcome feelings of hostility result in a generation of men who are valueless in a time when it seems that war or preparation for war is a normal state of affairs?
8. How would you approach the problem of an adolescent who has a desire to conform to moral standards taught by his parents but who also wants to fit in with the gang when they do things that oppose these standards?
9. Have you known any cases of truancy which do not seem to stem from any basic maladjustment? How would the treatment of such a case differ from that suggested in the chapter?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

BLAIR, ARTHUR WITT, and WILLIAM H. BURTON, *Growth and Development of the Preadolescent*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951. 221 pp.

This book is designed primarily for teachers of intermediate- and upper-grade children. Typical problems are discussed with a view to giving teachers guidance in their efforts to help all children—especially those who are giving evidence of maladjustment.

THORPE, LOUIS P., *The Psychology of Mental Health*, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1950. 747 pp.

Part IV, Conditions Marked by Inadequate Mental Health, pages 261-459, is recommended as being particularly pertinent to the material presented in this chapter. The discussion deals with minor symptoms and progresses through a consideration of psychoneuroses and psychoses.

THORPE, LOUIS P., and BARNEY KATZ, *The Psychology of Abnormal Behavior*, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1948. 877 pp.

Chapter XIII, pages 219-244, deals with the basic maladjustments. Each factor—insecurity, inferiority, guilt feelings, stuttering, and nervousness—is dealt with in terms of its nature, etiology, and suggested treatment or prevention.

WEXBURG, ERWIN, *Our Children in a Changing World*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937. 232 pp.

This book is a discussion by a psychiatrist of some of the problems faced by children in their out-of-school and in-school living. The origin of problems, their nature, and corrective measures are considered. The lying child, the timid, lazy, fearful, and the slow-learning one are among those discussed.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Feeling of Rejection, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42nd St., New York 36. (20 min, BW, sd.)

A young woman, socially maladjusted, the victim of blinding headaches, has the conviction that she is not wanted—that others impose upon her. Factors in her childhood and adolescence that contributed to her condition are portrayed. The film shows how she is helped by psychiatric counseling.

Overdependency, McGraw-Hill. (32 min, BW, sd.)

This is the case history of a young man whose life is crippled by behavior patterns carried over from a too dependent childhood. He finds difficulty in facing everyday problems and seeks refuge in illness and the solicitude of his mother, sister, and wife. Treatment by a general practitioner helps him face his problems.

Problem Child, Castle Films, 1445 Park Ave., New York 29. (20 min, BW, sd.)

Although this film portrays parent-child relationships, it will be of value in showing that an informed view of child behavior is necessary. What appears to be "problem behavior" may be only a phase of normal development.

4

MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN

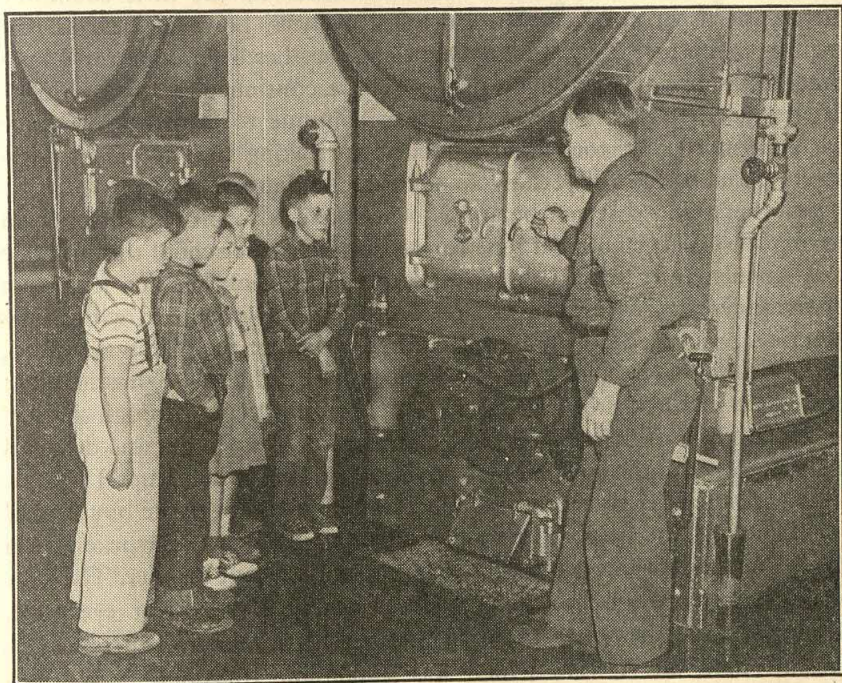
IT WAS indicated in Chapter 2 that the needs of children and adolescents are fundamentally the same as the needs of humans in general. Some needs, however, seem to vary in intensity at different age levels. This chapter will consider not so much distinctive needs of children as human needs which seem to be ascendant during the early school years.

Again it may be well to point out that the problem of mental health is rooted in needs. When children are experiencing difficulty in adjusting to their physical and social environment, when they are causing their parents and teachers to be perplexed, they are in effect saying, "Some of my needs are not met or on the way to becoming met. I'm not just sure what is wrong, but I'm trying to satisfy my needs. What I'm doing is a series of experiments, which seem frequently to disturb adults." Of course, his analysis or statement is not so clear as that, but his actions are speaking for him. If teachers can learn to translate the actions of the child and to fill in the gaps of "lack of understanding," they will be helping the inarticulate child to better mental health; and thus they may help him avoid some of the behaviors described in the previous chapter.

The following statement, though written about exceptional children, is pertinent to all children; and it can well serve to introduce the problem of meeting the needs of all children.

Teachers, other school officials, and social workers often need to give parents of exceptional children help in understanding that *all* children have the same basic physical and psychological needs; that all children need an adequate and balanced diet, sufficient rest and sleep, a comfortable temperature, and activity when well and rested; that all need to be loved and wanted, to have a reasonable independence in running their own lives and in making their own decisions, to feel a sense of achievement that comes from making things and doing jobs, to win the approval of others for what they are and do, and to feel that they are worth-while individuals who reasonably come up to their own inner standards. Helping children to find fulfillment for

these physical and psychological needs is as much the task of the parents of normal children as it is of the parents of exceptional children.¹



How many specific educational uses can be made of one excursion or visit? What lessons in human relations can be taught through a field trip? How does familiarity with one's immediate environment foster mental health?

ORGANIC NEEDS AND THE SCHOOL

Diet and Emotions. Many articles, books, and lectures are devoted to a description of the relationship between emotions and physical distress that seems to stem from improper diet. Pediatricians point out that constipation, indigestion, poor appetite, food aversions may, in many cases, be a matter of unpleasant emotion rather than a direct physical deficiency. Most discussions of this kind center around adults, but physical illness, seemingly stemming from improper diet, is also common among

¹ S. R. Laycock and George S. Stevenson; in 49th Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, *The Education of Exceptional Children*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1950, Chap. VII, pp. 122-123. Quoted by permission of the Society.

children. A knowledge of this relationship can be of value to teachers as they study and attempt to help solve the problems of some of their pupils.

At first glance, it may seem that the teacher can do little about the dietary needs of children. More detailed analysis, however, reveals that there is much that can be done. One thing that has been done for a long time, with an emphasis which might well be continued, is to teach children what dietary needs are. They can continue to learn the necessity for a balanced diet, for eating regularly, for taking time to eat in a leisurely fashion, and for seeking to achieve cleanliness.

Another thing that can be and is being done is to provide practice in setting a pleasant emotional tone for mealtime. In one school this practice was stimulated by an eighth-grade teacher, who took her cue from one of the social studies lessons. The plan achieved was in accord with many practical procedures for better mental health. Before the plan was started, the cafeteria was probably a typical one—considerable noise, hustling and pushing in order to sit near a dear friend, hurrying to get through quickly so that a game of basketball could be started. A little food was dropped on the tables and the floor and left for someone else to clean up. The contrast with the later situation was remarkable. An eighth-grade boy or girl was placed at the head of the table. This pupil chose a coworker from the lower grades to help conduct the meal in a pleasant manner. The subject for conversation had to be pleasant and interesting for everyone. There was no hurry, because each person had to wait for all others to finish. There was a team which was responsible for floral decorations when the season allowed. Cleanliness was emphasized. Courtesy was practiced, and suggestions for improvements were asked for and respected. It would be sufficient satisfaction to know that the pupils looked forward to the pleasant meal; but the results went further. Some of the conversations and remarks made by students led the teachers to realize that the practice provided in the school was having the effect of a stimulus for changing practices in the home. Some of the girls were interested in having their families practice courtesy, giving attention to making the table setting attractive, and controlling the conversation at mealtime. It is quite probable that many of these pupils would never learn how to make a meal maximally pleasant unless some practice were provided in the school.

It is worth noting that the effectiveness of the school's lessons on health and diet during the past years constitute a hope for the proponents of mental hygiene. They point out that a similar progress in mental health, as compared with recent gains in prevention of physical illness, could be accomplished if there were a continuing emphasis on the lessons of mental hygiene. They feel that the basic facts are just as teachable as are the facts of physical health. Certainly, we can all agree that the formation of habits

and attitudes in the early years will carry over into the field of adult mental hygiene.

Rest and Exercise as Children's Needs. Our schools have for a long time recognized that plenty of exercise in varied forms, alternated with periods of rest and relaxation, are necessary elements in children's growth. A major step toward improvement could be made by varying the amount and kind of exercise and by regulating the amount of rest in accordance with individual needs. Too many of our physical-activity programs are of the mass type. There are two things the teacher can do to improve the quality of rest and exercise.

First, she can give functional recognition to the facts recorded on the student's health card by the nurse or the doctor. A heart murmur not serious enough to warrant special attention might still predispose the child to tiring easily, and the warning taken from the card will make the teacher more alert to symptoms of tiredness. Defective vision may make it difficult and frustrating for some children to play in certain ball games. Digestive disturbances may indicate the need for somewhat more rest after meals than most children are taking. These are only illustrations, but they serve to show that the health card can have real significance if it is used for more than filling the requirements to keep a record.

Second, the teacher can watch for symptoms of restlessness which indicate the need for more vigorous exercise than the average student is getting. The buoyant energy of some youngsters can be utilized in vigorous play, with the result that they can more easily adjust themselves to the comparative inactivity of academic classroom procedures. On the other hand, there should be awareness of the fact that some youngsters are being more active than they should be. Tiredness may be indicated by inattentiveness, crossness in dealing with other children, and irritability manifested in connection with the teacher's directions. In such instances, the teacher may wish to experiment with some adroit limitation of vigorous exercise, or he may create situations in which the child may help the teacher while other youngsters are playing their rougher games. In many of the lower grades, mats are provided for youngsters so that they may stretch out and lie quietly during rest periods.

Let there be no doubt that children need activity. They need it to express themselves; to develop skills that will aid their feelings of confidence and competence; to practice physical skills that lay the foundation for adult activities; and, quite apart from the physical exercise, to provide experience in social competence. But at the same time, children need rest to replenish their energies. Often these needs are inadvertently neglected in the home, and the classroom teacher has the responsibility and the opportunity to help children take some steps in the proper direction of physical health that will contribute to mental well-being.

Heat and Ventilation of the Classroom. The need for proper heating and ventilation was mentioned in an earlier chapter among the needs of adults. That temperature has a psychological effect on the individual is illustrated by the fact that productivity is highest among those people who live in temperate zones. Contrary to popular opinion, we do not do our best work on warm, sunny days. Actually, though we think we do not feel like working, productivity is highest on days when temperatures vary from 60 to 70 degrees. It is therefore important that teachers pay attention to heat and ventilation, so that the pupils may be psychologically predisposed to productive activity.

Several routine things can be done by the teacher and his pupils to overcome natural disadvantages in heating and ventilation. Ideally, the pupils should be given a share of responsibility, first, to make the incidental lesson of heating and ventilation more effective; and second, to create an additional pressure toward the feeling that classroom activities are cooperative endeavors. Among the points to which pupils and teacher should give attention are the following: (1) Adapting temperature to the type of activity, so that a temperature of 68 to 70 degrees prevails for the sedentary type of activity, with a lowering of the temperature to around 60 degrees when activity is at a maximum in the classroom. (2) Being sensitive to odors. Odors are most noticeable when one goes into a room from out of doors, and they are an indication that the room needs airing. Unpleasant odors can detract from the pleasure derived from class activity. (3) Having classroom monitors who are responsible for giving the room an airing when the recess periods take the children from the room. The fact that the room is a little cooler on their return is an advantage, because contrasts should not be too marked; that is, after becoming heated on the playground, the children should preferably not return to a room that is overwarm. (4) Seeing that air vents and exhaust ducts are kept open at all times when the room is occupied.

Temperatures must be carefully watched, because a number of children in the same room will actually raise the temperature, even without additional furnace heat. Since the teacher has countless other activities to supervise, it will be advantageous to have some individuals in the class accept the responsibility for observing temperature conditions. This will be more readily achieved if a temperature chart is kept. The chart will also serve as a teaching device which will make the pupils more aware of inadequacies in their home heating system. Moreover, the cooperative approach relieves the teacher of responsibility and gives youngsters an opportunity to be contributing members of the group. Many teachers give such responsibilities to slow-learning children, who would otherwise have less chance to feel that they were making a contribution to the class.

Admittedly, attention to the details of heating and ventilation is a

minor matter. It seems to be adding to the already multifarious duties of a classroom teacher. Here again, it should be remembered that mental health consists of numerous small details. No one thing will ever be discovered that will make it possible to ignore all but *the* important thing. It is comforting to know that "step by step we go a long way."

Sensory Acuity and the School Child. It is difficult to decide whether the need for sensory acuity is an organic or a psychological need. At any rate, it is certain that, to the extent that a child is defective in vision or hearing, his problems of adjusting are more difficult. There is reason to doubt that defective vision, of itself, is a cause for misbehavior. Children who have difficulty in hearing are not necessarily problem children; in fact, many of them appear to be happy and well adjusted. But such defects are without doubt *contributing factors* to behavior anomalies. It follows that the way a child is treated with respect to his handicaps becomes a major factor in his reaction to any sensory defect. If the handicap is not recognized by parents and teachers, there is great likelihood that too much will be expected of the child and that pressures for school progress and social conformity may become too heavy for him to bear. If, on the other hand, due allowance is made for the handicap, the child will be encouraged to develop at a rate which for him is comfortably stimulating.

One child in the fourth grade who quarreled frequently with his classmates, who was inattentive during the giving of directions, and whose work did not seem to be in accord with his intelligence-test data was suspected of having poor vision. The teacher noted that he frequently squinted and twisted his head while looking at what was placed on the board. She tested the child by the Snellen chart and, on the basis of the results, referred him to his parents for further testing by their oculist. Glasses were prescribed and, the day he reappeared in class wearing his glasses, he paused at the door and shouted to a boy across the room, "Hi, Johnny. I can see you from here." Increased interest in schoolwork was immediately apparent and the boy's social relations improved markedly. Many similar accounts offer convincing evidence that inadequate contact with one's environment is a source of continuous tension and deep frustration.

There is, besides, the possibility that visual difficulty will result in a type of eyestrain that is physically uncomfortable. Smarting eyes, headaches, and dizziness make it difficult for a child to concentrate on what is going on in the classroom. The accompanying physical discomfort may tend to make him irritable, so that he has trouble getting along with teachers and pupils. Some aural difficulties may produce similar physical discomfort and thus stimulate an inattentive attitude, quite apart from the fact that the child does not hear what is being said during class activities. These generalizations have the support of facts, as it has often

been noted that when a child is fitted with glasses, when he has wax removed from his ears, or when he is supplied with a hearing aid, immediate improvement of behavior results.

Regular and frequent physical examination of school children is, therefore, a step toward meeting their physical needs. This examination should have two major objectives: (1) to stimulate the necessary steps in having the defect remedied as early as possible, and (2) to encourage the teacher to make due allowance for the handicap. Ideally, these examinations will be conducted by a regular physician or at least by a nurse or a teacher who has had special instruction in making such examinations. It may require the cooperation of doctor, nurse, and teacher to educate parents or to enlist the aid of charitable institutions in order that adequate correction may be given the child after a diagnosis has been made. The teacher can help by seating him where he can see or hear to best advantage and by being alert to deviations of behavior that may be explained by the defect. Obviously, such allowances are contingent upon the first step—becoming aware of the existence of the handicap. A physical examination is the most reliable means of establishing such awareness.

In other ways, too, the teacher may come to realize that the child is handicapped by a sensory defect. Indications of difficulty in hearing may be one or several of the following:

1. Inability to locate the direction from which sound is coming.
2. More than normal use of the hands in making wants known.
3. Voice which lacks an intonation pattern and resonance.
4. Difficulty in maintaining balance—frequent falling or stumbling.
5. Faulty articulation and mispronunciation of common words.
6. Inattention and frequent errors in carrying out directions.
7. Turning the head to catch sound with the better ear.
8. Cupping the hands to catch sound better.
9. Frequently asking to have statements repeated.
10. Poor spelling when dictation is used.
11. Lack of interest in group activities.
12. Peculiar posture—tilting the head into an unusual position.

In addition, such indications as visible discharge from the ear, complaints of earaches, and the reporting of noises in the head should be followed up by the child's having a thorough hearing examination.

Certain other behavior symptoms may be a warning that the child is suffering from visual handicap. The teacher should be so thoroughly aware of these symptoms that it would be difficult to overlook them.

1. Attempting to brush off something when reading or writing.
2. Rubbing the eyes frequently.
3. Watering eyes, bloodshot eyes and red eyelids, or frequent sties.
4. Complaining of headaches or blurring of reading matter.

5. Crying after reading or showing fits of temper.
6. Screwing up the face or blinking excessively.
7. Holding a book far away or too close while reading.
8. Shutting or covering one eye while reading.
9. Tilting the head to one side when reading or viewing the board.
10. Frequent confusion of *m*'s and *n*'s or *o*'s and *e*'s.
11. Tensing the body when looking at distant objects.
12. Inattention during reading lessons, while something is being written on the board or during field trips.

The relation of sensory acuity to organic need might be stated as follows: The child has a need to have close and accurate contact with his physical environment. It will be seen in the following pages that sensory acuity will also condition the way in which the child's psychological and social needs will be met.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PERSONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN

Feelings of Security and the Classroom. Feelings of security, as has already been stated, are based on more than merely being accepted. Perhaps for the very young child the attitude of others is sufficient to make him feel secure (or insecure), but for children of school age more than acceptance is needed. Security for the older child is based partially on his confidence and competence. He must feel that he is not only accepted but is important in the functioning of his group—that he is a part of the total classroom concern.

The twofold source of feelings of security suggests a twofold responsibility for the teacher. He must accept the child for what he is—in spite of his slowness in learning, his addiction to the use of foul language, his lack of cleanliness, or his impertinence and his disobedience. In addition, he must help other children to accept him—teaching them to aid, rather than hinder, him in the changes that will make him more acceptable. This latter has been done with striking simplicity by teachers who take their pupils into their confidence and explain to them that a certain boy or girl is in need of help, that his actions are a way of saying that he is having difficulty, and that although he may seem to resent their kindnesses at first, he will soon come to appreciate them and they in turn will appreciate him.

It requires but a small amount of friendliness to show a child that he is accepted. A school principal, noted for his friendliness, showed this quality by giving a pat on the back to those who spoke to him. And pupils in the school would walk much out of their way for the chance to greet him with "Hello." The principal not only knew the names of more than 500 youngsters in the school, but could give interesting little observations about their characteristics and difficulties. On one occasion,

he noted a little boy crying on the front steps. He simply went over and sat beside the lad and said nothing for several minutes. When the crying ceased, he put his arm around the boy and began to talk to him about general topics. When, after a few minutes of impersonal conversation, the boy began to respond, the principal inquired about the trouble and commiserated with him. Finally he gave a gentle shove and said, "O.K. Better get going, your teacher will be missing you." This friendliness, this acceptance will go a long way in helping youngsters understand that they are appreciated.

The second thing that can be done is to allow the child enough freedom, enough "rope," so that he can learn to do things for himself. Instead of being given minute directions relative to what should be read, how a picture should be drawn, what the outline of a discussion should be, the child might well be permitted to try out some things for himself. Children need to develop independence if they are to develop feelings of security that are genuine. Dr. William C. Blatz has implied this in some words of advice to parents: "This whole question of emotional training is not a matter of affection. I would say there is entirely too much affection in families! If there were a good deal more healthy indifference, we who happen to be in the field of mental health of children would perhaps have less to do."² This does not mean that the child should be left free to do whatever he wants to do, but does mean that within the bounds of propriety and safety he should be allowed the freedom of activity that will result in the exercise of independence.

The Need to Manipulate and to Satisfy Curiosity. The need to explore and to learn is a difficult one to satisfy in elementary-school children because of our haste to have the child grow up. In short, there is too great a tendency among teachers to interpret behavior of children on an adult level. It is easy for us, with our wealth of background experience, to see the value of acquiring skill in computation. We perceive the importance of developing good taste and proficiency in reading and of practicing habits of courtesy and respect; but elementary pupils often seem to be unimpressed by the importance of such factors. Of course, many do develop "in a desirable manner," but it may very well be that they do it not because they realize the importance of these things, but because they wish to please their teachers and parents and because of commendable adult example. Such motivation is desirable.

On the other hand, there are those who seem to be little concerned about pleasing others. Getting them to see the value of formal schooling is somewhat difficult and there is probably no easy solution. However,

² William C. Blatz, in *Modern Concepts of Child Development*, Progressive Education Booklet 6, Columbus, Ohio: American Education Press, Inc., 1938, p. 20. By permission of Charles E. Merrill Company.

it is possible to study children, as they play, as they react in the classroom, and as they converse with pupils and teachers, so as to find out what their motivations may be. These motivations can then be used as the point of departure in planning school activities. Studying baseball, learning home nursing incident to caring for a sick brother, running a candy shop, or discovering how the school heating plant works—any of these might well serve as the focal point for school activities that will motivate students to learn to read, figure, and get along with others. The point is that we must not assume that children are ready to satisfy curiosity because the syllabus so prescribes. A real attempt must be made to discover where they are, *by listening*. The discovery of present interest and the use of the present locus to provide opportunities for learning and manipulating are vital.

A specific example of how the curiosity of boys and girls can be turned to constructive education is provided in the following account:

Things happen educationally in rural Hennepin County, near Minnesota's Twin Cities. That is, things certainly happened at the Earle Brown School last year when 25 eighth-graders, their teacher, Ethel Nordling, and their principal, Marvin Prokasky, traveled 1,200 miles by bus from the Twin Cities to Cloquet, Duluth, the north shore, through the iron range country, Itasca State Park, and Minnesota's lake region. The trip took 6 days. Chartering the bus cost \$400. The P.T.A. raised the money by putting on an outdoor carnival and paid the bill. All but two students had earned enough money during the school year—by delivering papers, working on farms, or baby sitting—to pay anticipated expenses, exclusive of transportation. Room and board, all contracted for in advance, cost each child \$20. The classroom on wheels was such a glowing success that Miss Nordling and Mr. Prokasky are not only repeating, this spring, but are dreaming of the day when they can take the students over the border and into Canada. . . .

What better way could they learn their country's history than by visiting what they called the "beginning" of the Mississippi river in Lake Itasca, and even wading across it? What better way could they learn practical English in class than by writing their own letters, in advance of the trip, for hotel and cabin reservations? Or by writing "Thank you" letters after their return?

In class, these children even prepared the rules of conduct to be observed throughout the trip. Their notebooks duly record such thoughtful etiquette notes as: (1) In the bus be careful. Do not push or shove. (2) If you get some candy or chewing gum, don't throw the paper on the floor. Don't stick gum underneath the seats. (3) When we get to a café, don't run. (4) Boys should not shout and try to shove in front of girls. They should act like gentlemen.

Ethel Nordling said, "The children learned a great deal about manners and poise. Many of them had never used napkins at their family dinner table;

they had to learn how. They had to learn how to meet and talk with people.”³

This undertaking may have been rather ambitious, but it suggests a possible approach. Many teachers have used trips to the local dairy; short train trips; a visit to the boat docks, the packing plant, an oil refinery, a smelter, or a factory, as the starting point for giving youngsters a chance to see, hear, and touch things in order to satisfy their curiosity in an educationally constructive manner. Moreover, these experiences provide motivations for the more strictly academic subjects. We must be careful not to believe that the verbalizations which are full of meaning for adults, with their wider experiences, have anything like the same degree of meaning for youngsters whose actual contact with the local world is extremely limited.

The Need for Expanding Cultural Contacts. The universal human needs to be independent, to achieve, and to develop tension tolerance are not sufficiently different in children to warrant special treatment in this section. However, there is a problem for children which is somewhat unique and which also illustrates the satisfaction of the needs just mentioned. This has to do with the necessity for the child to bridge the gap between the limited (not in the sense of being lower) culture of the home and the broader culture of life in the school and the community.

Many of the answers to the question, “Why, Mommy?” that are given in the school are different from those given by parents. That children are confused by this contrast is indicated by the high incidence of delinquency among children of foreign-born parents—in cases where the home culture varies most markedly from the local culture. Examples of this kind of contrast are seen in such matters as autocratic discipline when compared with the discipline of purposeful activity—“Don’t take nuthin’ off nobody” versus cooperation and sharing, and “You can do better than your cousin” against the notion that real accomplishment in accordance with one’s ability is commendable. Contrasts exist in attitudes and actions relative to sex activities; language usage (including swearing); views of drinking, religion, honesty, manner of dress, and personal cleanliness—to mention only a few.

The importance of these cultural contrasts can be seen when we stop to think that, although human needs are the same throughout the world, in different cultures the needs are met quite differently. Then, too, needs are met differently from one generation to another because of changing social mores. We must therefore realize that needs are not all that must be considered in planning adjustment. Culture also is important. Culture

³ Frances V. Rummell, “What Are Good Teachers Like?” *School Life*, Vol. 30 (June, 1948), p. 9.

shapes the man just as surely as do the basic organic and psychological activities which motivate him to action. In fact, it may be that in many instances culture shapes the need. For example, the competitive society in which we live may be a stronger influence in forming our desire for achievement and recognition than any organic predisposition would be.

The practical outcome of the need for the child to bridge the gap between the culture of the home and the wider culture is that the teacher is faced with the problem of what he can do to help the child in making the adjustment to both the home and the wider culture. The significance of the problem is tersely expressed by Lawrence K. Frank in these words:

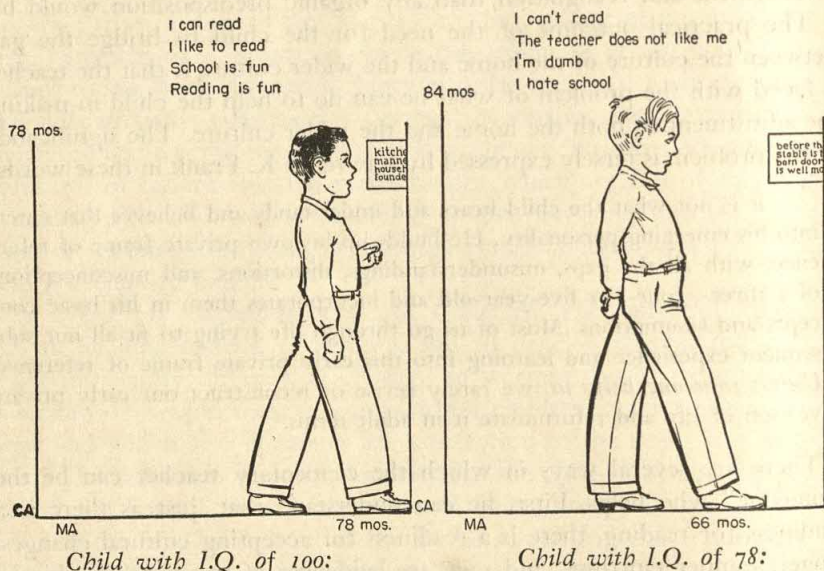
. . . it is not what the child hears and understands and believes that enters into his emerging personality. He builds up his own private frame of reference, with all the gaps, misunderstandings, distortions, and misconceptions of a three-, four-, or five-year-old and incorporates them in his basic concepts and assumptions. Most of us go through life trying to fit all our subsequent experience and learning into this early private frame of reference. *Unless someone helps us*, we rarely revise or reconstruct our early private version of life and reformulate it in adult terms.⁴

There are several ways in which the elementary teacher can be the "someone" who helps. First, he can understand that, just as there is a readiness for reading, there is a readiness for accepting cultural changes. Anger, temper tantrums, and rage are evidences of too much pushing—perhaps pushing too forcefully to adapt to a wider culture. The transition should therefore be slowed down. Smaller lessons (in cooperation, in discipline, etc.) should be given. If the child is allowed a chance to mature before he is subjected to sharp contrasts, he can accept the contrasts of our culture more readily. A pupil may learn to read more readily merely by waiting; whereas, if he is forced to try to read before he is ready, emotional blocks are created which make it difficult for him to learn, even after other aspects of readiness have developed (see Fig. 1).

Second, the teacher can study the life in the different subdivisions of the community. He can have interesting and instructive experience by visiting some of the minority cultures—the Negro, the Mexican, the Japanese section of his city. He can visit the homes of the farmers who work on shares, the homes of the day laborers, and the camps of the itinerant crop followers—people who live in trailers and one-room cabins provided by the farm owner. Some appreciation of the varying cultures can be achieved by talking with teachers from different communities and sections of the city. Teachers in "downtown" schools have a different

⁴ Lawrence K. Frank, *Personality and Culture*, New York: Hinds, Hayden and Eldredge, Inc., 1948, p. 11. By permission of the present publishers, The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Danville, Ill. (Italics not in original.)

class of pupils from those in the restricted residential areas or those in the suburban areas. These visits and conversations may be viewed not just as an additional responsibility but as a means of enjoying and profiting from leisure time. More specifically in the realm of work would



$$\frac{MA}{CA} \times 100 = I.Q.$$

$$\frac{78}{78} \times 100 = 100$$

$$\frac{66}{84} \times 100 = 78.5$$

Fig. 1. The child at the left is ready for reading at the chronological age of 6.5 years (78 months). He not only learns to read but develops a favorable attitude toward learning. The child at the right, although chronologically older, is not ready for reading and develops unfavorable attitudes toward learning, toward himself, and toward the school. These attitudes may still block his reading efforts when, at the approximate chronological age of 8.3 years (99 months), he develops the mental age for reading readiness. (It should be noted that MA is only one factor in reading readiness.)

be the study of sociology books which deal with the class structure of our society.⁵

Third, the child will be helped in making the transition to a wider culture if he feels that he is recognized and accepted in that larger social group. Therefore, the teacher will help by doing anything he can to

⁵ See, for example, W. Allison Davis and Robert J. Havighurst, *Father of the Man*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1947.

show the pupils that they are liked and to assure them that their actions are not really frowned upon but regarded as needing reconstruction. The simple evidences of friendship—a smile, a few words of recognition, serenity and consistency of manner, expressions of appreciation—these give the children an assurance that will be of value in promoting cultural transition as surely as the same attitudes count for helpful influences in other areas of adjustment.

MEETING THE SOCIAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN

Social Needs of Children Are Not Unique. To attempt to differentiate ways of meeting the social needs of children from those already suggested for meeting the social needs of humans in general would be redundant. Children, quite as much as any other individuals, need to have status in the eyes of others, they need to be loved for what they are (experimenting humans) and in spite of what they do, they need to have the companionship of their peers and of adults; and they, too, need a task, a plan, and freedom to carry out the plan. What teachers have use for is not so much specific suggestions for meeting these needs as a functional recognition of the fact that the needs take an active part in forming the conduct of children.

Teachers Need to Understand Varied Social Values. Teachers speak freely of recognizing the child's background, but the differences between a child who lives in a lower class home and one in a middle or an upper class home may not be fully appreciated. These children learn to place different values on competition, they express their affection in contrasting ways, they have divergent views of the property rights of others, they display varied reactions toward discipline, and they value membership in different kinds of groups.

Fortunately, more and more teachers are recognizing the effects of social backgrounds in assessing children's needs and in planning programs based on those needs. While school people can look to social anthropologists for more information and more extensive studies on sub-groups in our society, they are themselves in the best position to learn and understand how the social backgrounds of the children they teach have promoted differences in those children's behaviors and purposes.⁶

Such study as is suggested in the above quotation is needed because of the tendency in each of us to generalize from his own experience. We are likely to think that the kind of home we had is in many ways

⁶ Elizabeth Hall Brady in *Fostering Mental Health in our Schools*, 1950 Yearbook of National Education Association, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C., 1950, p. 31. By permission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

typical of the homes of our pupils. A few visits to various homes would soon convince us that there are not any average homes just as truly as there are not any average pupils; but we would still have to guard against the tendency to think in terms of our own experience. We must somehow learn to appreciate that differences in children's social behavior are the outcome of experience rather than of a desire to be different.

The Child's Desire for Approval and Acceptance. Children learn at an early age that the satisfaction of their wants depends upon gaining the esteem of others. A safe and constructive assumption for a teacher to act upon is that the child is trying to please. His actions, from the adult view, may not seem pleasing, but it must be realized that social skills are in the process of developing all through the grades and high school. Growth takes place on uneven fronts and is characterized by progress and regressions. Intentions are not perfectly correlated with actions. Teachers can capitalize on knowledge of this growth pattern by (1) more readily showing approval for desirable behavior, and (2) assisting children in developing the physical, intellectual, and social skills that merit approval.

Approval is an attitude similar to, but not identical with, acceptance. Needed at all times is acceptance of the child for what he is. This is fundamentally a matter of affection. Approval has to do with the actions of the child. As adults, we need not approve all that the child does. We can, and should, let him know that some behaviors are disapproved. Study after study indicates that children do not resent punishment which they understand and which does not seem to undermine their feelings of being accepted. They can understand that what they have done has not met with approval. But when punishment takes on a highly personal aspect, it is strongly resented.

One of the errors into which both teachers and parents fall in regard to acceptance and approval has to do with the previously mentioned tendency to make comparisons. When a child is unfavorably compared with another (and this is the usual sort of comparison), his personal worth is undermined. Such remarks as "Why can't you act like the little gentleman that Jimmy is?" or "See how nicely Mary puts away her materials" are not likely to engender a spirit of emulation in a child who has a healthy degree of independence. A better approach would be, "You did such an excellent job yesterday, I'm sure that you can do it as well today" or "We all get to feeling a little 'out of sorts.' You're not acting like your usual self."

The concepts of approval and acceptance are clarified in a study by the National Education Association which stresses the necessity for teachers to understand. This does not necessarily imply approval of what the student does. It does indicate that teachers must have a deep and

tolerant acceptance of the individual as being different from the teacher and from other pupils, and of his right to be different.⁷

EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN

Command of the Fundamental Processes. Certainly one class of needs of children that might possibly be glossed over if only fundamental psychological and social needs are considered is that of mastery of the essentials of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Stressing the significance of basic human needs implies no neglect of the realization that, in our society, one cannot achieve maximum efficiency without acquiring basic academic skills. In fact, education in this area is more than a need. It is an obligation that rests upon adults for the raising of mentally healthy individuals.

No teacher should lose sight of the fact that concern with "personality development" is largely an approach to the effective teaching of fundamental knowledges. It is not an either-or proposition. It is a matter of giving considered attention to both personality and functional knowledge. Giving attention to the physical health needs of children is an approach to helping them learn "academic" lessons with greater facility. Giving attention to psychological needs is an approach to meaningful motivation in an attempt to perform the historic purposes of the school. Giving attention to social needs is to recognize that motivation and purpose have many facets and many approaches.

Let there be no doubt that the pupils' learning to read, compute, and communicate is a responsibility of the school today just as truly as it ever has been. The mental hygiene viewpoint merely emphasizes that this responsibility can best be carried out by recognition that the "whole child" goes to school—that learning is not simply a matter of mental activity. At no point in this book is it the intention to create an impression that learning school subjects is unimportant. The meaning intended is that, for satisfactory development, personal and social values and needs must be given an adequate place *with* the educational needs of children.

A PRECAUTION IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN

There are some pertinent questions related to the meeting of children's needs. Is it possible to go too far in solving their problems? Should children not have the experience of meeting conflict and frustration? Are we preparing children for psychological maturity if we protect them from "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune"? Certainly, psychologists have warned us of the dangers of overprotection.

There are several answers to these questions. Without any danger of children's being raised in glass cages or being prevented from coming

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 306.

into contact with other children, the notion that they should freely be exposed to chickenpox, mumps, measles, and the like has been cast aside. The belief now is that, while children are better off if these diseases can be avoided, they need not be raised in an altogether aseptic environment. Similarly, we can encourage their seeking wide social and psychological experience without exposing them to inevitable frustration and defeat. Children learn by their successes as surely as by humiliation and, at the same time, we believe, they learn confidence and friendliness rather than reticence and suspicion. *Helping* children stand on their own feet does not imply relieving them of all burdens. *Guiding the child* does not mean walking hand in hand with him through life. Guidance implies the pointing out of signposts, the offering of suggestions and precautions, preparation for the journey he is to make. It means taking into consideration his unique being in terms of his ability and background.

Danger of Overorganizing the Child's Life. One indication that control of the conditions of child welfare may be in danger of going too far can be found in some evidence of overorganization in planning for the use of leisure time. This is a particular peril because our changing culture seems to indicate that we must learn to use more freedom. Emphasis in education, in recent years, on the thought that leisure time should be used constructively has been justifiable. Achievement of this end has been mentioned as an objective of education for decades. The decrease in working hours since 1900 has been marked, and changes in the working pattern are not confined to industry. The pattern in the home has changed considerably, too. The number of labor-saving devices now available and in use within the home has had the effect of reducing the working hours of the housewife. These factors make the constructive use of leisure time a problem of increasing importance.

As the problem has been recognized, the schools, as well as the community at large, have instigated many programs for children (and sometimes for adults) which approach a solution. The objectives of girl scouts, cubs, boy scouts, junior theaters, young people's clubs, teen-age night spots, and parent-children's organizations are to be warmly commended. But some parents and other adults feel that there is a danger of overorganizing the child's life, leaving him too little time to develop his own resources for entertainment. As parents, we may feel that our children ought to be allowed the opportunities for development provided by these admirable organizations, which offer avenues for enrichment that we should like very much to have had, ourselves, for our own benefit when we were children. It is entirely possible, though, that the very lack of such opportunities serves as a stimulus to the development of independence and initiative in the use of leisure time. If there are too many organizations, the individual may become dependent upon mass entertain-

ment and community-sponsored programs and miss the satisfaction of thinking and planning for himself.)

The problem of overorganization of the child's life is illustrated by a letter recently received from a teacher who wrote:

And I have a word to say about the kiddies who live in the X— neighborhood or similar places. Mine go swimming at the "Y" Monday nights, piano lessons Tuesday, dancing lessons Wednesday, Cub Scouts Thursday, swimming again Friday, see the local movie Saturday afternoon, and go off on a fine day's trip with the family Sunday. In the summer they travel all over the United States and Canada. School becomes simply the place you have to go to before you can dash off some place to play. But is it even play? My children do not know how to play together, or even play alone. They have no "inner resources" because they have never had to "kill" a series of afternoons after school. They go some place where someone organizes the play for them. Again, they are never given a moment to sit down and relax. I have never seen such a huge congregation of overstimulated children! It appears that about sixteen out of my thirty-two are physically incapable of sitting at a desk for more than ten minutes, and I have two that cannot do it even for five minutes. And I swear that I am not exaggerating. Other teachers in the building are in hearty agreement. The classroom outcome of this business is that there are always five or six bolder ones who declare out loud that they do not want to do arithmetic and, what's more, they do not intend to do it! So there, too! And all day you spend pulling youngsters off the window sills and desks. They almost forget which is their desk because they are at them so seldom. Right in the middle of some group activity, Junior dashes out of his seat, runs over to Buster to get the football team lined up! And to make it even more interesting, you can't reason, discuss, or make a demand because Junior, overstimulated youngster that he is, cannot listen and comprehend at the same time! Group discussion? You never have a group.

Now the books say that discipline is, to a great extent, no problem as long as the schoolwork is of great interest to each child. He must be motivated. All I can say is, the school has nothing to offer these children whose parents can always top it at home, by traveling, or shipping them off every afternoon to some grand place. They simply make the best of school until 3:30, when they are off some place where they can be entertained! And "making the best of school" is accomplished with the mass use of slingshots, gum, paper wads, paper airplanes, comic books, and fisticuffs.

To add a cheery note, every now and then comes a rewarding day. These, I find, are days jam-packed with movies, stories, and football games. But every day just simply cannot be like that. With superhuman effort I can plan one a week.

The problem is illustrated on an individual plane by a telephone conversation between two eight-year-old boys. One of them called on

Wednesday to invite the other over to play for half an hour between 4:00 and 4:30 on Friday. The caller was going swimming with his father, that afternoon, Thursday was cub pack meeting, but Friday he would have half an hour available before he took his clarinet lesson. Incidentally, this same boy took Spanish lessons on Tuesday, and on Saturdays he met with the Oregon Journal Juniors. By way of contrast, the boy who was called said, "Well, I can't promise to come over. I don't know what I'll be doing Friday."

Contrasting Effects of Freedom versus Organization. Claudia Lewis, in her book *Children of the Cumberland*, raises somewhat the same question when she compares the life of children reared in Greenwich Village with the life of children brought up in backwards communities. She indicates that the average intelligence quotient of children in Greenwich Village is higher, probably because of the many stimulating experiences they have—kindergartens, music lessons, dancing instruction, library clubs, and the like. Although children of the Cumberland have an intelligence quotient which is on the average lower than city children of the same age, they seem to possess an independence and inner tranquillity and poise which those in the city lack. Miss Lewis wonders whether it may be that rapid mental growth is purchased at the price of emotional instability. The question for teachers—and parents—is whether or not there may be some way of providing both the mental stimulation and the free time that will allow for some degree of independence in the use of leisure. The author suggests two answers: (1) encourage parents to provide free time for their children during which no leadership is given and no suggestions are made, and (2) help children organize their group activities and then gradually reduce the degree of adult domination as the children gain in the ability to direct themselves.

There are various theories of play which bear on the problem of leisure and organization. One is the theory of recapitulation (the child relives, through his play, the evolution of the race); and another is the surplus-energy theory (energy not expended in growth is released in play). The recreation theory claims that play is a means of relief from the drudgery of work and routine; it recreates one's supply of energy and adds to the zest of living. This last theory supports the belief that overorganization may be questionable. Too great emphasis on organization of play may make it seem like work.

The difference between work and play is difficult to establish. What is work for one person may be play for another. Baseball playing, for instance, may be work for the professional but it is play for boys who voluntarily get teams together and do their "baseballing" whenever they can and wish. The difference lies largely in the motivations of the persons taking part in the activity.

In terms of motivation, a distinction can be made between activities carried on largely for their own sake and activities carried on for the purpose of society. This is the distinction between *play* and *work*. Work is constrained in the sense that its content is determined mainly by the wishes of others, whereas the content of play is determined largely by the person's own wishes. The motivation for work tends to be extrinsic and objective; whereas that for play tends to be internal and individual.⁸

Organizing all the child's time for him may have the effect of forcing him into activities which, because of the degree of compulsion, become work and thus lose some of their values as play.

Ideally, children should have enough free time so that they could derive some of the following advantages out of play: (1) improve hand-eye coordinations and neuromuscular skills by variety rather than by routine repetition, (2) provide an opportunity for self-expression and the exercise of ingenuity—use of imagination, (3) provide for the release of tensions through symbolic play (pretending injury or sickness to some member of the family who makes life unpleasant), (4) afford compensation for some real or imagined deficiency, and (5) give exercise in learning the importance and techniques of social adjustment. An examination of this list warrants the conclusion that overorganization may deprive the youngster of some of the mental hygiene values which a greater degree of freedom would provide. There is no intention here of condemning organized activity, kindergartens, camps for older children, and a degree of adult leadership. These are desirable programs if they are not carried to excess. It is the overorganization, not the activity itself, which is being questioned.

Teachers can help in the solution of this problem by explaining the problem to parents, by providing leadership but not domination, and by giving their pupils encouragement and allowing them time to carry on free and independent activities.

Florence Goodenough stresses the child's need for freedom as being secondary in importance only to the need of a feeling for security.

The second need of the child is *opportunity for unhampered development*. This is not to say that he must not know restraint, that he be allowed to run wild without design or guidance. It means that restriction upon his acts shall not be imposed erratically or without reason, that he be allowed to make his own mistakes as far as this is at all consistent with reasonable attention to his health and safety—and these limits are much broader than many nervous parents think. It means that he shall be allowed to learn for himself, not expected to satisfy himself with the tales of other's experiences,

⁸ John E. Anderson, *The Psychology of Development and Personal Adjustment*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1949, p. 249. By permission of the publisher.

even though they may be those of his own parents. He must be allowed to experiment widely in order that he may choose wisely. It means that he shall not be hampered by a false idea of his own place in the social world through thoughtless exploitation, by being constantly encouraged to "show off" or by unwise indulgence. It means the encouragement of initiative and independence, learning to do for himself and fend for himself. It means freedom from the hampering effects of fear by learning to meet situations that he is capable of overcoming, to avoid issues not worth a struggle, and to admit defeat honestly and courageously.⁹

SUMMARY

The needs of children are basically the same as those of all humans. The needs of children differ in relative degrees of intensity and there are differences in the way those needs should be met. Diet and nutrition are significant because they condition the energy and motivation of children, besides laying the foundation for later health. Similarly, rest and exercise influence behavior and purpose. Symptoms of sensory deficiency must be watched by teachers because the attitudes of the child toward learning and toward himself are conditioned by his perception of the environment.

The child's need for a sense of security can be recognized in the classroom by the teacher's giving him a chance to stand on his own feet and by the genuine acceptance of what he is. Because there is so great a probability that in childhood schoolwork will take the form of abstractions hard to understand, teachers must give children a chance to manipulate, see, feel, and in other ways satisfy their curiosity. This is particularly true in the field of social functioning. Children need experience, guidance, and encouragement in making the transition from the home to wider social contacts. A child can best be helped to stand on his own feet and to make wider social contacts if he is accepted by his teacher and his peers, even though not all of his actions are approved.

Emphasizing the fundamental needs of children implies no neglect of the importance of their acquiring subject-matter skills. The whole emphasis of mental hygiene is to provide a set of planned experiences—in social, personal, and academic realms—that will help an individual to achieve an integrated personality. This means that all facets of growth, including the acquisition of the fundamental processes, must be considered in the mental hygiene approach to education.

There are certain danger points that must be avoided. Care must be taken that adults do not overorganize the life of the child. He needs freedom, as well as *guidance* (not prescription), if he is to achieve the kind

⁹ Florence Goodenough, *Developmental Psychology*, 2d ed., New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1945, pp. 676-677. By permission of the publisher.

of mental health that is needed in a democratic society. Many of the suggestions contained in the chapter are included in the following set of rules for providing "the basis for a setting in which mental health can grow":

1. Give, do not barter, affection, so that the child may feel *We* more often than *Me*.
2. Avoid the use of belittling, shame, or ridicule, so that the child may believe that he is worth while and capable of becoming a useful and desired adult. Do not be afraid to use praise.
3. Teach values and meanings which relate to the actual world in which the child lives. Be consistent, stick to a method which is yours, and do not try to be an omniscient Saint.
4. Encourage independence and responsibility rather than obedience.
5. Remember that if you train a child properly, you should lose him. Then your job is done, and done well.¹⁰

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Relate to the class some instance in which some apparently physical difficulty of a child was actually a result of emotional upset.
2. What are some physical features of the classroom, besides heat and ventilation, that would affect the well-being of children?
3. What are the limits of the teacher's responsibility with regard to physical health and sensory acuity of children?
4. Defend or criticize the proposition that psychological security is dependent upon the individual's ability to stand on his own feet.
5. Get some small groups of teachers (grouped according to age of pupils they teach or will teach) to discuss means of increasing the opportunity to see and manipulate "real things."
6. Is it really possible to disapprove of the child's actions without disapproving of him? Support your answer.
7. Can you cite any instances in which academic work has improved because of the supplying of some of the child's needs which are mentioned in the chapter?
8. Defend or criticize the statement that there is a tendency to overorganize the life of children. Is this any more or less true of some socioeconomic levels than of others?
9. Do you agree with the statement, "Play is the serious business of the child"?
10. Can you think of any need a child has that an adolescent or an adult does not have?
11. Do you agree with Preston's implication that consistency is more important than saintliness?

¹⁰ George H. Preston, *The Substance of Mental Health*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1943, p. 147. By permission of the publisher.

12. Suggest several specific techniques for improving the amount and quality of social contacts in the early grades.

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

American Council on Education, *Helping Teachers Understand Children*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1945. 468 pp.

This book, written by the Staff of the Division of Child Development and Teacher Personnel, stresses the wisdom of teachers' pooling the information acquired by all staff members in attempting to understand individual children. Definite steps and procedures are suggested for acquiring the kind of information most needed. The book should be read and studied by all teachers.

BAILEY, EDNA W., *Studying Children in School*, 2d ed., New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1939. 182 pp.

The author shows how a teacher can use observational techniques to gain a clear picture of how the normal child lives and develops. Emphasis is placed on native endowment, characteristics of levels of development, social relationships, and self-realization.

HYMES, JAMES L., JR., *A Pound of Prevention*, New York: New York Committee on Mental Hygiene, 1947. 63 pp.

This booklet bears the subtitle, "How Teachers Can Meet the Emotional Needs of Young Children." The author gives, in conversational style, numerous suggestions for interpreting the behavior of children and meeting the needs which are indicated by that behavior. Numerous "do's" and "don'ts" are cited.

MERRY, FRIEDA KIEFER and RALPH VICKERS MERRY, *From Infancy to Adolescence*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940. 330 pp.

The developmental approach to the understanding of children is used in this book. It is clearly written and makes use of illustrations and anecdotal materials. Such problems as emotional development, play interests, reading, personality, and character formation are discussed.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Children's Emotions, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42nd St., New York 36. (22 min, BW, sd.)

Discusses the major emotions of childhood. Narrator points out that the principal characteristics of children's emotional reactions are intensity and frequency, though they be of short duration, which result in a wide variety of behavior responses.

Children Growing Up with Others, United World Films, Inc., 1445 Park Ave., New York 29. (30 min, BW, sd.)

Shows how youngsters grow from involuntary dependence into contributing members of their family, school, and community groups. The need for tact, discernment, and patience on the part of adults is emphasized.

Human Beginnings, Association Films, Inc., 35 West 45th St., New York 19. (23 min, C, sd.)

Emphasizes the need for intelligent cooperation between the home and the school in the teaching of children. Designed to teach primary children how to accept the new baby in the family.

The Quiet One, Athena Films, 165 West 46th St., New York 19. (70 min, BW, sd.)

A remarkable document about an unwanted child of Harlem, who is sent to Wiltwick School for treatment. Shows the environmental and psychological factors that drove him to delinquency.

5

SPECIAL NEEDS OF ADOLESCENTS

It is commonly agreed that adolescence is a time of stress and strain. The period is a difficult one, during which the individual is neither a child nor yet an adult. Through these years further differentiation and integration of personality is taking place. A realization of what adolescence is is no more important than is an appreciation of what causes it. If the older explanations of causes of adolescence are accepted—namely, rapid growth with resultant awkwardness and uncertainty and the realization of sexual maturation—there is little that can be done beyond being tolerant and sympathetic. According to this view, the difficulties of adolescence are natural and inevitable. If, however, the contemporary view, which is coming to modify, if not to replace, the older view, is accepted there is immediately more hope that the needs can be met constructively. The contemporary view is that adolescence is caused by the pressures of modern civilization.

The adolescent is literally in a "no man's land" of society. There is little occasion (except in a time of war) when the work of the late teenagers is needed or appreciated. These youths must necessarily remain dependent when they want to do, and are capable of doing, constructive work. A few generations ago, the young person was an economic asset to the family; now he is a financial liability, even in his early twenties. Frequently his parents do not appreciate this shift in cultural and economic organization. A similar situation has come about with respect to marriage. Financial dependence and the lengthening of the common-school period have had the result of delaying marriage beyond the average age of marriage at the turn of the century. Shifting moral standards and an alteration of ideals attendant upon two world wars have left many adults without firm convictions. Consequently, the adolescent is too often at a loss in trying to find firm anchors for his convictions and ideals.

The writer has no longing to see a "return to the good old days." Actually the changes that have taken place in cultural organization can be turned to the advantage of adolescents. Certainly the prolonging of education can be a great advantage if educational opportunities and ex-

pectations are geared to natural growth processes, to the cultural conditions which exist, and to the unique needs of adolescents. The purpose of this chapter is to indicate some of the ways in which the liabilities of the cultural period can be turned into assets.



What needs of adolescents are being met by such activities as shown above? What facets of personality are being exercised? What skills are being developed? What other needs must be met in other ways?

(Adolescents have the same basic organic, psychological, and social needs as do persons of any age, *i.e.*, the need for security, the need to love and be loved, the need for new experiences, the need for independence, and the like. It must be realized that adolescence is merely one phase of the continuous process of growth and development.) The point to be appreciated is that their needs, if not unique to the adolescent phase of development, are felt somewhat more poignantly than at other ages. Their unique place (or rather displacement) in society is what constitutes the major part of the problem. Any help which teachers give adolescents in facing and absorbing their "between age" difficulties increases the prospects of mental health both now and later.

SOME INSISTENT NEEDS OF ADOLESCENTS

There are many statements of the needs of adolescents. There is a recognition that their needs differ in intensity, if not in kind, during these years of "stress." In this section some of the more immediate, specific, and pressing needs of adolescents—needs that bear directly on mental health—will be discussed. In the section which follows, the statement of adolescent needs as formulated by the National Education Association will be presented. While there is no sharp line of demarcation between this section and the one that follows, it might be said that the stress here is on mental hygiene in the adolescent's total life, while the next section deals with problems more closely related to the academic aspect.

✓ *Adolescents Need to Be Treated as Adults.* Feelings of security are, in a large measure, dependent upon adults' being able to treat the adolescent, even though he is undeniably immature, as if he were a mature person. That he should want to be independent is highly desirable. It provides a goal for his growth. Teachers who will listen to his opinions, discuss his problems with him, admit the truth of some of his statements, and point out inconsistencies in a kindly manner, in the same way they would deal with the divergent opinions of their own peers, are likely to foster such desirable growth. Teachers who, instead of "laying down the law," have helped adolescents work out their problems have found that they grow rapidly toward sensible decisions. Ways of providing such experiences abound in curriculum making, in disciplinary procedures, and in the direction (not arbitrary) of social contacts. When opportunities for adult behavior are denied in the home, it is all the more necessary that the lack be compensated for by the procedures used in the classroom.

✓ *Peer Adjustment.* Questionnaire studies of adolescents indicate that a sharply felt need is that of satisfactory peer adjustment. A baby or a young child does not seem to be greatly concerned about whether or not he is getting along harmoniously with others. Babies characteristically play with other babies only in a later stage of development. Young children play with others when it is convenient but do not seem greatly concerned if they have no playmates. By the time children have reached school age, they are concerned about having playmates and often attempt to buy friendship when they are unable to earn it; but, at least in the early grades, it is more important to the child to please his teacher than it is to please his peers. This is decidedly not the case when they arrive at adolescence. (A major concern of the adolescent is to make a favorable impression upon his peers. Pleasing parents and teachers frequently is of secondary importance.)

The importance of peer adjustment can be seen by examining a phase of the growth process. The adolescents are attempting to be adults; they

want to appear to be men and women. They have a deep-seated desire to grow away from what they feel to be the hampering influences of parental domination. The group most available to them outside the family circle is that of their friends and classmates. To appear to these to be right, significant, and properly conforming is highly important. Anxiety over seeming not to fit the pattern is likely to bring about symptoms of tension and frustration.

Parents and teachers can be extraordinarily helpful to the developing adolescent if they will recognize the importance of peer adjustment. A first step in this recognition is to realize that the apparent repudiation of parents and teachers is a healthy indication. It shows that the adolescent is growing away from the need of adult support and is attempting to strike out for himself. Another requisite is to realize that adolescents are living in a different generation. Understanding between the generations will always be a recurring problem. In fact, when the adolescent of today becomes an adult, responsible for the actions of a younger generation, he too will find difficulty in understanding that group, which, in its turn, will be living in a different world.

Young people are always "going to the dogs" in a sense. Some differences between the parent generation and young people are only natural. These differences are recognized by members of each generation in the familiar way each justifies its position by discrediting the other. Hence, young people for many generations have referred to their elders as "old fogies" who "don't understand," are "old-fashioned" and "out-of-date." Similarly, the elder generation has continued through the years to express its concern over the follies of youth in such terms as "flaming youth," "the lost generation," "irresponsible," and "headed for trouble."¹

Teachers when they have an understanding of the importance of peer adjustment can better perceive and deal with some of its manifestations. They will realize the importance of bizarre hair-dos (no matter how unbecoming these may appear in the eyes of adults), the value of wearing skirts of the proper length, of using cosmetics, and of having a sufficient number of sweaters. The boy with his heavy brogues, tight dungarees, or dirty cords may repudiate his parents' ideas of what the well-dressed young man should wear, but to the boy these details help to make him an integral member of the crowd. It is this same phenomenon which lies back of his assuming a dislike for school, wanting to stay out late, and being able to choose his own friends. Certainly the adoption of the current mode with regard to dress, speech, and manners is only a surface manifestation of peer adjustment, but the teacher must be careful not to

¹ Evelyn Millis Duvall, *Keeping Up with Teen-agers*, Public Affairs Pamphlet 127, New York: Public Affairs Committee, Inc., 1947, p. 2. By permission of the publisher.

underestimate the importance of conformity to the adolescents' customs.

Another aspect of peer adjustment concerns the widespread notion among adolescents that they are "different." Even when his peculiar differences are so slight as to be unnoticeable to others, an adolescent sometimes feels that his own characteristics are such as to set him off from the group in a decisive way. Thus, a mole, a wide mouth or a small one, the size of his nose, or the shape of his legs will be likely to bother him deeply. When the variances are noticeable, the reaction to them probably differs very little from what it would be if they were too slight to be noticed. Marked deviations in height or weight are serious problems and should be regarded as such by the adolescent's counselors. That they often are not so viewed is revealed in the case of a girl who came to the writer for counsel and opened her conversation with the words, "I'm too tall—and don't tell me that it really doesn't matter, because it does." It did matter to her but not to anyone else. She was erect and good-looking, was popular with girls, had all the dates she wanted, was active and successful in athletics, and had a good scholastic record.

Teacher Adjustment. First in some lists and ranking high in other lists of the needs that adolescents feel is that of teacher adjustment. As the adolescent tries to grow away from his parents, he reaches out to other adults for companionship and guidance. The teacher is the adult with whom he has the most intimate and the greatest number of contacts. Hence, it is important to him that these associations should be harmonious and mature. This imposes on the teacher the necessity of never laughing or sneering at the immaturity of the pupil; in fact, the teacher must take the view that the confidences given to him are of serious import. As a matter of fact, these teacher-pupil contacts are serious. They will determine to a remarkable degree the direction that growth will take through the adolescent years.

Inability to get along with teachers is a source of concern to the young person. In spite of the fact that he puts on a blasé front, he wishes to show his adulthood by being able to establish harmonious adult contacts. Teachers can aid, in and out of class, by respecting the opinions that are proffered, by listening and conversing rather than lecturing, by avoiding the temptation to say, "You'll find out the truth when you are older" or "You'll realize the truth when you have more experience."

Parent-teacher-pupil Adjustment. The adolescent's adjustment to the teacher is particularly important because the teacher helps provide a bridge between the child's world and the adult's world. The teacher is the best known adult, outside the family circle. It is therefore pertinent to say a few words of precaution about the function of the Parent-Teachers Association at the secondary level.

The spirit behind the Parent-Teachers Association at the high-school level is commendable. Certainly the advantage of having all those who are dealing with young people pool their resources of information and their viewpoints can hardly be questioned. However, there is a question as to the validity of the technique for gaining this cooperation. Without being dogmatically certain, the writer hazards the view that parent-teacher associations at the high-school level should not be encouraged.

Examination of the fundamental needs of human beings shows that high on the list are the desires for personal significance and independence. One of the most poignant problems of the adolescent, as has been noted, is to grow to adulthood and to outgrow dependence on his parents. He wishes to be recognized as an individual in his own right, one who is able to take care of his own problems. He does not realize so fully as the teacher how much he needs the help of adults—particularly his parents. His struggle for independence is often most acute in relation to his parents. The parents, in the eyes of the adolescent, are the ones who constitute the greatest obstacle to his achieving independence and significance.

High-school teachers are in a strategic position to give constructive help to the adolescent in the process of becoming an adult able to handle his own affairs. In the first place, there is great likelihood that the only adults whom the adolescent knows intimately, aside from his parents, are his teachers. He has daily association with them for several hours at a time. In the second place, the teacher, by virtue of being a teacher, holds a place of prestige and eminence, from the standpoint of the young person. It frequently happens that a young boy or girl actually experiences ardent hero worship toward particular teachers. Many teachers, looking back at their own high-school days, recall that they too felt great admiration for some of their teachers. Young people, if they are treated as adults, will come to teachers with their problems. But in order that this strategic position may be capitalized on, a high degree of rapport between pupil and teacher must exist.

There is some danger that the P.T.A. will interfere with the building of the rapport that is so essential. When a young person sees his parents talking with his teachers, he is likely to feel that he is the subject of conversation, although it may be that his feeling is not justified. He probably thinks that his teacher is abandoning him and siding with his parents—in league against him. If he gets this impression, he begins to look upon the teacher as another obstacle to his growing up and will show his resentment by ignoring the counsel and friendship which would otherwise be available.

Not all adolescents react in this way. Many of them are truly glad to have their parents become acquainted with their teachers. They are

pleased when their parents attend school functions and visit their classes (on visiting days). Those who have this attitude, however, are those who are receiving healthy encouragement from their parents to become independent. They are the ones who are allowed the freedom of choice and action that is the privilege of adulthood. They are pupils who are experiencing no acute problems of adjustment in the school; consequently, they do not need help. Nevertheless, there are some who agree with the high-school student who said, "I'm embarrassed by my parents' coming to school. I try everything I know, short of demanding, to keep them away from my teachers."

A P.T.A. will be of no particular value to any student who is not experiencing a problem. It is likely to prove a marked detriment to one who feels that parental fetters are too confining. It is, therefore, recommended that a formal organization for the teachers' getting together with parents be discouraged. Let teachers remain away from parents, so that those few pupils who need adult help may get it independently. More is to be gained by maintaining rapport and getting a picture of the way the young person feels about his situation than by finding out the actual facts of the case.

Disapproval of a formal organization does not deny the desirability of the teachers' contact with parents. The argument is that contact with the adolescent is likely to be even more important. In the many cases of young people who wish to have parents and teachers meet, there is no reason why the meeting cannot be arranged to take place informally. It would be a valuable approach, particularly when the adolescent is to be discussed, to have him become a party to the discussion. Whenever it is possible, anything that needs to be said to the parent should be said in the presence of the young person concerned. The difficulty which is created by having adults joined together to solve young people's problems, in the absence of the young people themselves, is being met by establishing parent-teacher-pupil organizations, in which the pupil is as important an element as are the others. In order to accomplish this, the youthful members must be elected to office, hold places on committees, participate in programs, and in general be given adult roles to handle.

Determination of Purposes. Psychologists have recently been placing more emphasis on purposiveness and purposefulness of behavior. (They stress the fact that all behavior is caused—that it does not just happen. An attempt is constantly being made by teachers to transform purposive behavior (manifest in vague strivings) into purposeful behavior (in which goals are more clearly seen and are more personal). The adolescent is no different from any other person in regard to the purposiveness and purposefulness of behavior; but the adolescent who is making healthy growth becomes less and less satisfied with vague goals. He is no longer satisfied

to be doing school tasks merely because it is the wish of the teacher that he should, or because a given activity is included in the curriculum. He wishes to know the reasons for doing what he does and to know particularly how these activities will be of personal benefit to him. He is, in short, looking for long-range purposes and is restive under the regime of day-by-day tasks.

There are two major forms which the determination of purposes may take. One is the selection of a life occupation, and the other is the formulation of a philosophy of, or point of view toward, life. Some individuals will have made considerable progress toward this determination of purposes, while others seem not to be much concerned about the matter. To the extent that no progress has been made, these will continue to be immature and sporadic in their efforts. Even tentative determination of purposes will help them to marshal their efforts and to concentrate their efforts in a society in which specialization is of prime importance.

Studies of the objectives of adolescents show that characteristically there is a great deal of change and shifting of interests. This is all to the good. Final choices of occupations cannot be expected to be made during the high-school years; nor should an unalterable philosophy of life be formed in adolescence—or, for that matter, at any time of life. The tentative selection of an occupation will result in exploration and study that will ultimately provide a sounder basis for mature selection. By revealing the personal benefits of academic pursuits, it will encourage a more purposeful attack upon school activities. And it gives the individual the feeling that his activities have more than a transitory effect, that they are influencing his future.

One needs clear purposes if he is to possess good mental health, if he is to enjoy life, if he is to avoid becoming a drifter. Teachers can help by making the study of occupations an integral part of their courses of instruction, whether these courses be in mathematics, social studies, English, science, or such subjects as woodworking and secretarial training. As the requirements of jobs, the background needed, the personal qualities which are requisite, the opportunities available are discussed, the student will be better able to take whatever further steps toward preparation for his future may be necessary. These same courses can serve as bases for discussions of the meaning of morality, citizenship, effective personality, and brotherhood, and thus will provide some basis for the formulation of a tentative philosophy of life.

In class discussions, counseling interviews, and informal conversations, the teacher can be helpful if, as he stresses the importance of formulation of purposes, he emphasizes the normality of change of purposes. The wavering nature of purposes during adolescence is recognized as an indication of healthy growth. This, of course, does not refer to such in-

clinations as wanting to be a cowboy on Monday and a doctor on Tuesday, but indicates that no one need be discouraged if objectives change during the course of a term's work. The important thing is that attention be given to the matter of purposes and that teachers aid by pointing out, in formal classwork, as well as in informal contacts, the necessity of devoting conscious attention to the determination of purposes. The need for direction is acutely felt by the normal adolescent. In earlier experience, short-term goals were sufficient; but as a person becomes more mature, the lack of purpose is a distinct handicap, even though it may not be acutely felt.

Establish Feelings of Worth. Children and adults, as well as adolescents, need to have a feeling of personal worth or significance. This need is emphasized repeatedly in discussions of the mental health of children, and its significance for adults is being more explicitly recognized. The problem for adolescents is made the more pressing by virtue of changing social relations as they expand their experiential world to include a wide range of contacts outside the home. It is this need for a feeling of personal worth that gives rise to the urgent desire for conformity to adolescent attitudes, manner of dress, and modes of conduct. The more an adolescent doubts his personal worth, the more servile his conformity becomes. The more firmly he believes in his own worth, the greater is the possibility for his achieving independence of thought and action.

There are several ways in which teachers can help the adolescent as he expands his social environment and changes the nature of circumstances which will satisfy the need for a feeling of worth. Obviously, one is to treat him with respect. Listen to his views, give consideration to his opinions. Find occasion to praise the contributions which he makes to group thinking and action. Treat him, when possible, as though he were the adult he is trying to be. This does not mean that he should be flattered or praised when there is no justification for such encouragement. The writer, when he recently advised his student teachers that a little praise goes a long, long way, was gratified to find, on each of his next four class visits, that the teachers were able to find justifiable reason for giving praise. Each student was seen to smile in appreciation.

Another way the teacher can help is to delegate responsibility both to the group and to individuals. This responsibility might include such things as the selection of topics for study, the choosing of committees for carrying out the divisions of work, giving these committees a voice in classroom control, and control of such things as heating, ventilation, lighting, and the manipulation of projectors, radios, maps, globes, and the like. Individuals can be given responsibility by recognition of their special talents and skills so that they can be capitalized on. This will help in two ways: first, the teacher will know the individual well enough to be able

to use his talents appropriately and, second, the pupil is given an opportunity to display his merits. To be able to sing, draw, or write well is something that builds up a feeling of worth. Or perhaps residence in a particular neighborhood, knowledge of a given occupation through familiarity with the father's vocation, or knowledge gained through vacation travel to a particular region will provide the student with resources for assuming a degree of responsibility which is out of the ordinary.

Closely allied to, perhaps actually a part of, responsibility is the opportunity for self-direction and independence of decision. This fundamental concept of the current emphasis in guidance has been facetiously, but penetratingly, defined as "Seeing through Johnny so Johnny can see himself through"—the stress being placed on Johnny's ultimate self-determination. This can easily prove to be a sore point, because the decisions of an adolescent are often at variance with the matured view of the adult. But it would be well to keep in mind that one learns through failure as well as through success. If youths are not allowed the opportunity to make mistakes in their own decisions, they are denied, as well, the opportunity to select for themselves the avenues leading to success. It is not an adequate answer to the dilemma to say that youths cannot be given freedom to make their own decisions because they have not had enough experience previously. A start must be made sometime, and earlier denial only makes it the more necessary that no further opportunity shall be lost.

Quite probably, the most important factor in developing feelings of worth is that of developing skills. Previously mentioned freedoms must be given to the adolescent; skills are something which he has to develop for himself. But teachers can assist by recognizing and encouraging latent talent. They can stress the necessity for work and effort if skills are to be developed. They can point out how skills will operate to make the adolescent's life more effective and gratifying. Above all, they can make the classroom a laboratory for the development of intellectual, artistically creative, and social skills. Purposeful effort is economical effort, and teachers can aid by clarifying the goals which are desirable.

Being liked is another factor basic to feelings of worth. Many an adolescent believes that he is so different from others that his being liked is essential to his feeling of assurance. Often such adolescents feel that those who like them do so in spite of their shortcomings. The key to the situation is a simple one; it is contained in the cliché, "To know is to understand." Here again is evident the importance of the teacher's knowing about the assets and liabilities of the individuals with whom he works. Factual knowledge obtained from tests, past school marks, or case histories must be supplemented with the subjective data submitted by the student in his conversations, his free writing, and his artistic creations.

Closely akin to the need for being liked is the need to be recognized. A manifestation of this need is the exhibitionistic nature of much of the adolescent's behavior. If recognition can be earned through scholastic distinction, competency in sports, opportunity to display one's creative work, and leadership ability, there will be less need for the loud talking, swaggering, and other attention-getting behavior familiar at that age. Adolescents can be helped by the teacher's recognizing the source of such conduct and following up this approach by offering opportunities for the young persons to assume responsibility, display their talents, and be recognized for the contributions they can make.

The teacher may protest that capitalizing on the above suggestions will be difficult and time-consuming. It must be admitted that the objection is well founded. But to the extent that the teachers can help their pupils to achieve satisfactory feelings of worth, they will count the time well spent and find the work gratifying. Moreover, in the course of time and with repeated practice, the effort to obtain these results will become easier, even habitual.

Understanding Oneself. The need to understand oneself is particularly manifest during the adolescent years. The need is generated by the widening social contacts which are a concomitant of growing up. Adolescents need to feel that they can make their lives effective, that they have qualities which are valuable to themselves and to society, that their drives and motives are normal.

Much of this understanding will come about as the result of experience. Further understanding will be gained through the indirect aid that teachers can give by promoting peer adjustment, by facilitating teacher-pupil adjustment, by assisting with the clarification of personal purposes, and by fostering feelings of personal worth. In addition, much can be done by a direct attack on the problem. In the opinion of many, self-understanding is a topic that can profitably be attacked through direct study and discussion; and this opinion is justified by the outcome of such studies, when they have been undertaken.

Repeatedly, teachers have reported that they have been amazed to find how penetrating the discussion of personal problems by adolescents can be. Class discussions, forums, group counseling, and debates have been successfully used to bring about better understanding. An example of the effectiveness shown by young people in solving their own problems is that provided by some contemporary teaching regarding the use of alcohol. Attempts to influence the conduct of young people through fear—alcoholism, drunken driving, and the negative physical effects—have produced little positive change. Approaching the problem through moralizing has been ineffective, as well. But discussions by adolescents about why people drink, what the psychological effects of alcohol are, and

what limitations the use of alcohol places on personality development have led to the kind of understanding that provides positive motivation. This has been attested to by reports on the success of Allied Youth, which show that drinking is reduced through study and responsibility on the part of the youths themselves.²

Preparation for Marriage. One of the neglected areas in helping adolescents is that of preparing them for marriage. In view of the fact that practically all these young people will, within a very short period of time, be engaged in home and family relationships, it seems surprising that more direct attention has not been given to their preparation for that experience. Many of the needs stressed in mental hygiene will find their fruition in the institution of marriage. Feelings of security, feelings of belongingness, the desire and need to love and be loved, opportunities for personal accomplishment, and the organic needs related to sex may be realized through a successful marriage. Yet statistics show that more than one out of four marriages results in the frustration, disappointment, and heart-break of a divorce. The three out of four marriages that do not end in divorce could undoubtedly yield greater satisfaction to the participants if more adequate preparation were provided.

Many of the lessons relative to a successful marriage can better be learned before the stress of falling in love with the wrong person or before the problems of marital adjustment have become a reality. Furthermore, the teacher is in a more advantageous position to deal with these problems than is the parent, because of the lack of emotional involvement. It seems that there could be few problems for high-school teachers that would transcend in importance or frequency those that concern marriage. It will therefore pay, in terms of teaching adequacy, to be well informed relative to current problems, theories, and facts of marriage.

One of the important considerations is that, although sex is important, it is one, and only one, of the factors that make for successful marriage. Literature should be made available to adolescents that frankly discusses sex problems, while placing them in proper perspective. It should be made clear that adequacy of personality, past history of social adequacy, the previous happiness of the young people concerned, and the happiness of their parents is of equal, if not greater, importance in marital adjustment than is sex adequacy. Unhealthy experimentation in premartial sex experiences might well be diminished if young people were instructed that sexual satisfaction is an achievement, a creation, rather than a discovery. Inasmuch as sex is mental and emotional in nature, as well as physical, it is impossible to discover whether one is "sexually adjusted" through ex-

² Kenneth F. Weaver, "Youth Finds a Way," *National Education Association Journal*, Vol. 36 (October, 1947), p. 517.

periences in the back of a car or in a cheap hotel room. The haste, fear, and apprehension which attend such adventures are only remotely related to the sex pleasures of emotionally mature married people. The importance of conducting sex experiences within the verbally accepted mores of our society cannot be overstressed.

In spite of Hollywood versions of romance, it is the exceptional instance in which love at first sight develops into satisfactory marriage. The more we can do to abolish the notion that "marriages are made in heaven"—that one should *find* the perfect mate made to order—the sooner we shall get young people to see that marriage, like mental health, is a matter of continuous adjustment. Instead of their searching for the chimera of the perfect mate, they should realize that their own personal adequacy creates the perfect mate—that the determination of two people to make their marriage work is more important than is stumbling on to a person who can and will put up with the shortcomings of a spouse.

A study of the factors which contribute to divorce should be instructive to young people as they seek their mates. Differences in religious belief, marked differences in cultural background, and widely varying moral standards constitute hazards. On the other hand, differences in age, likeness or unlikeness in personality (as long as each is mature), and differences in interests are less hazardous than is commonly believed. It should be brought to the attention of young people that a well-balanced personality, on the part of each, is the really important item. They can be taught to look for evidences of balance in those with whom they have dates. These evidences are having friends—both of their own and of the other sex—lack of complaints against their parents and associates, interest in a variety of activities, and concern for the interest and welfare of others. It is too late to look for these qualities after one has fallen in love and, since "love at first sight" is a fallacious notion, it is important that one should look for these evidences in persons with whom he or she dates.

It is a fact that happiness in marriage tends to run in families. Newly established marriages have a better chance for success if the parents of the newlyweds are happily married. The implication is twofold. First, one might well seek his or her mate from among unbroken homes; and second, if one finds his mate has come from a broken home, this should serve as a warning that a hazard may be anticipated and extra care should be exercised that problems are immediately and mutually solved. Many young people who come from broken homes are particularly determined that their married life will be different and these have an advantage; however, the fact that the basic personality trends are established in one's early home remains as a peril.

The writer has carried on surveys in his classes in college which indicated that young people, even beyond high school, are utterly unrealistic

with regard to the income they consider necessary in order to get married. If marriage were to be delayed until income were up to what 75 to 80 per cent of the class considered desirable, it would not be consummated until about fifteen years after graduation from college. In other words, it is pure fantasy for an average young man to think he should provide for his wife "in the manner to which she has become accustomed." He should realize that it probably took her father some twenty years to establish his daughter's present economic level. Again, the lesson should be emphasized that a strong marriage is built not on economic advantages but upon adequacy of personality. Studies of divorce show that, where low income is cited as a cause for marriage breakdown, the actual cause is lack of maturity of personality on the part of one or both of the marriage mates.

Another lesson that should be taught before it is too late is the fallacy of the notion that one can marry to reform another. A knowledge of the nature of personality growth shows that in very few instances can one just decide that a poor trait will be cast aside because of marriage. Heavy drinking, dishonesty, promiscuity, laziness, and incompetence are characterized by habits and attitudes that are a long time in forming and usually require the help of experts and a long period of time for reconstruction.

These lessons and others related to marital success are sometimes attacked in "personal problems" courses in high school and as topics in such courses as social living. Even though there is no formal course which paves the way to the introduction of such material, there is much the teacher can do to supply the needs of adolescents in this area where women will spend the majority of their time and men will spend a substantial proportion of their time. The personal attitudes of the teachers, the remarks they make, the advice they give can all serve to help young people to make marriage a deep source of personal satisfaction and mental health rather than to let it be one of the dark spots in life.

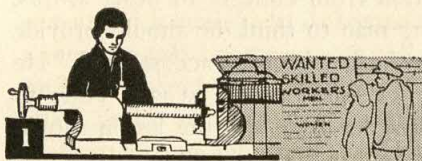
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION STATEMENT OF ADOLESCENT NEEDS

Needs of Adolescents. There are many lists of adolescent needs but one which may justifiably be viewed with respect, because it was formulated by the processes of group thinking, is the list prepared by the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association.³ See Fig. 2. The part that these needs and their satisfaction play in

³ *Planning for American Youth*, Washington, D.C., Educational Policies Commission, National Education Association, 1944, p. 10. Permission to use headings granted by the National Association of Secondary-School Principals.

the pursuit of mental health for the adolescent is discussed under the following numbered paragraphs:

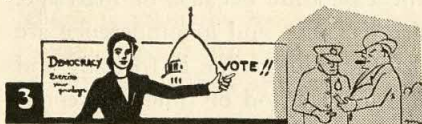
1. "All youth need to develop salable skills." Not all teachers have



All youth need to develop salable skills and those understandings and attitudes that make the worker an intelligent and productive participant in economic life. To this end, most youth need supervised work experience as well as education in the skills and knowledge of their occupations.



All youth need to develop and maintain good health and physical fitness.



All youth need to understand the rights and duties of the citizen of a democratic society, and to be diligent and competent in the performance of their obligations as members of the community and citizens of the state and nation.



All youth need to understand the significance of the family for the individual and society and the conditions conducive to successful family life.



All youth need to know how to purchase and use goods and services intelligently, understanding both the values received by the consumer and the economic consequences of their acts.



All youth need to understand the methods of science, the influence of science on human life, and the main scientific facts concerning the nature of the world and of man.



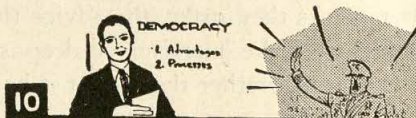
All youth need opportunities to develop their capacities to appreciate beauty in literature, art, music, and nature.



All youth need to be able to use their leisuretime well and to budget it wisely, balancing activities that yield satisfactions to the individual with those that are socially useful.



All youth need to develop respect for other persons, to grow in their insight into ethical values and principles, and to be able to live and work cooperatively with others.



All youth need to grow in their ability to think rationally, to express their thoughts clearly, and to read and listen with understanding.

Fig. 2. The imperative needs of youth. Permission to reprint granted by the National Association of Secondary-School Principals.

direct responsibility for helping adolescents develop specific vocational skills. All teachers do have a responsibility for teaching the lesson of the dignity of labor, for instilling an acceptance of the fact that people have to work, and for encouraging a willingness to do any work that has to be done. Except for a brief time during the last war, the past fifty

years has seen a steadily decreasing freedom of choice in the selection of one's work. Increasingly, the problem is becoming not "What kind of work am I best suited for and will I most like?" but "Will it be possible for me to get a job of any kind?" Unless adolescents have this fact impressed upon them, they will have a hazard to their mental health imposed upon them because they have failed to understand that there is a difference between developing skills and developing "salable" skills. This factor makes it necessary to shift the primary emphasis regarding vocational preparation from the field of individual aptitudes and interests to what jobs need to be done in terms of the nature of our national economy. The teacher's part is to foster a sense of responsibility, a willingness to do what has to be done, and a belief in the respectability of any job which is well done and which contributes to the welfare of society.

2. "All youth need to develop and maintain good health and physical fitness." The simple lesson of physiology needs to be reemphasized in the high school. Youth who are growing in power and in the range of their activities need to have it impressed upon them that their resources are not inexhaustible. They should know that they need adequate amounts of sleep, a sensible diet, and appropriate exercise. That the adolescent needs these lessons is attested to in the following,

Adolescents are notoriously careless about their health. They neglect almost every hygiene rule and they regard the common precautions taken in childhood as unnecessary or even silly. They paddle around in the rain without rubbers, hats, or umbrellas; they eat between meals; they fill up on sweets; they revel in food combinations that not even the healthiest digestive mechanism can cope with; and they burn the candle at both ends by expending their energy heavily during the day without replenishing it with adequate rest and sleep at night.⁴

In addition to the elementary facts of hygiene, the adolescent should have an opportunity to learn about menstruation, nocturnal emissions, experimental masturbation, acne, rapid growth of the nose, profuse sweating, and the development of secondary sex characteristics which are normal phases of development. Fortunately, there is a steadily growing number of teachers who are able and willing to bring these facts to the attention of the adolescent and are thus helping them to absorb the experiences of their growth and development. An upper grade or high-school teacher who does not know the details of such experiences as are mentioned above and who is unwilling to discuss them with pupils can hardly consider that he is filling his role in mental hygiene adequately.

⁴ By permission from *Adolescent Development* by Elizabeth B. Hurlock, 1949, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., p. 100.

3. "All youth need to understand the rights and duties of the citizen of a democratic society." The "duty" of citizenship becomes a "privilege" when mental hygiene is considered. "He who would find his life must first lose it" is not just an important lesson of Christianity; it is a sound principle of mental health. Psychologists and psychiatrists make frequent mention of the fact that a person must "get outside of himself," diminish preoccupation with personal problems, and give serious consideration to the welfare of others, if he would enjoy good mental health. When teachers provide opportunities for the exercise of citizenship in their classes, when they acquaint pupils with the current issues that are troubling the country, when they give them actual contact with governing bodies and community political institutions, they are doing more than to prepare good voters. They are providing an important element in the continuing mental health of students today—the citizen of tomorrow. Contemporary educators are stressing the fact that, to as great an extent as is possible, students should practice the theories they study in school. To the extent that ways are provided for pupils to practice citizenship, to the extent that they are given opportunities to participate in community projects and to engage in projects which redound to the benefit of their school, they are learning an important lesson of personal mental hygiene.

4. "All youth need to understand the significance of the family for the individual and society." Whether or not the family is declining in its significance as an educative factor is a moot question. The fact that there are many school children who have inadequate opportunities to learn effective patterns of family life is not debatable. Since both boys and girls will find in their own later family life sources of either deep satisfaction or marked dissatisfaction, it is imperative that serious attention be given in the school to the subject of family life. Facts pertaining to the development of adjustive personalities, wholesome sex relations, care of children, and financial management of the home are basic to the continuing mental health of children who are today in school. There is much literature, in the form of books and pamphlets written for adolescents, that can be used in courses dealing with family life; and there are units in health and social-living courses that can be used to advance the aim of better understanding of the elements of effective family life. In view of the fact that women spend most of their time in the home and that a man spends almost as much time in his home as he does at his work, it seems as if there could be no study which would transcend this topic in importance.

5. "All youth need to know how to purchase and use goods and services intelligently." Study of the purchase and use of goods is part of most high-school home economics courses, but there are large numbers of

students who do not take such courses. When one stops to think of the barrage of advertising in newspapers, magazines, billboards, on the radio and television to which we are all exposed, it would seem that instruction in wise buying would be a fundamental part of preparation for effective living. Some teachers have attacked the problem through tying the lessons in with the study of mathematics, while others have approached it in their orientation and personal-problems classes. It can be studied from the vantage point of industrial arts classes, economics courses, and home-room groups. In view of the objection to the multiplication of courses, such approaches—tying the subject in with present courses—seem to offer the most feasible solution at the present time. The responsibility of the teacher is to become informed himself and, as he does so, he will discern ways of utilizing the knowledge to enhance the more facile adjustment of his pupils.

6. "All youth need to understand the influence of science on human life." This need is, to an extent, being met by present courses in science. Too often, though, there are teachers who emphasize the "science" aspect to the exclusion of its "influence on human life." What is needed is a new emphasis, one which will direct attention to the fact that science is constantly functioning in daily life. Studies show that with the extension of education upward there is a decrease in the amount of superstition prevalent, but these same studies also show that even well-educated persons retain some ill-founded beliefs. Many teachers have lists of common superstitions, which they attack in the course of their instruction. This is a technique that could well be emulated by all teachers, but particularly by the science teachers. Such an approach has a direct bearing upon the lessons of mental hygiene that the student is absorbing during the course of his formal schooling. It is true that changes in orientation take place slowly, but the fact remains that the change does occur.

Without danger of an argument regarding the relative merits of science versus values, it can safely be stated that men must devote time to the study of the impact of science on human lives. The atom and hydrogen bombs, of which we hear and read so much, are illustrations of the fact that science needs to be interpreted and used in terms of its influence on people the world over. This emphasis can best be made when the citizens of tomorrow are learning their first facts about science. In short, the science of living harmoniously with one's fellow men should be an integral part of the science of physics, chemistry, and biology.

7. "All youth need an appreciation of literature, art, music, and nature." The theory of liberal, or general, education has emphasized this value for ages. Yet the practice has fallen short of the goal for many present-day school people. Perhaps the reason for the lack has been that the appreciation aspect has been secondary to the knowledge of the facts of

literature, art, and the like. Appreciation has been achieved by those pupils who have studied under teachers who teach the lessons of shared experiences, of human insights, who enjoy these things themselves, who are sensitive to the needs and interests of their pupils. Teachers are needed who see in music and art ways of enriching personal lives, means of expressing tensions and of obtaining surcease from the daily cares that periodically become too burdensome.

Appreciation of these things has a dual role in mental health. In the first place, they provide an avenue for the exercise of the positive, up-building emotions and thus supply needs and satisfactions which help one to round out his existence. The second part of their service, not entirely separate from the first, is that they open an opportunity for the "profitable use of leisure time." Art, literature, and nature are more than mere pastimes. They represent areas and activities of life which, although ordinarily given little place in the ordinary work-a-day experiences of the average individual, can serve to round out a wholesome way of living.

8. "All youth need to be able to use their leisure time well and to budget it wisely." This objective of education deserves more attention today than it did at the time it was stated as one of the "Seven Cardinal Objectives of Secondary Education." One reason is that the working day is steadily decreasing in length. As is indicated in Chapter 4, the decreasing length of the working day and the introduction of labor-saving devices in the home impose more responsibility in the exercise of freedom. The changes mean that the problem of what to do with leisure time will become more and more pressing. The second factor grows out of the first: on account of lack of education, people have turned more and more to mass entertainment. "Stupendous spectacles" and "supercolossal productions" are not necessarily detrimental, but there are few individuals who would argue that there is anything very constructive about them. As one grows to maturity and on into later maturity, this mass entertainment becomes less and less attractive and the consequence is an impoverished oldster who is less able to handle the leisure imposed upon him. This leads to the third factor regarding the critical place that education for leisure deserves in our work toward better mental health; namely, there are increasingly large numbers of people who are reaching the age of sixty-five (the traditional time for retirement). The increase in the number of oldsters is more than a representative increase due to the growth of population; the proportion of oldsters is increasing because of the improvement of medical science. This is a problem of adolescence, because the habits of youth partially determine the actions and attitudes of the same person in later life.

From the standpoint of mental health, using leisure time well involves a number of considerations. One is that the leisure time should serve to

complement the kind of work one does to make a living; *i.e.*, intellectual pursuits for the laborer and physical pursuits for the professional worker. This complementary function of leisure will provide the opportunity to exercise the various capacities with which all men are endowed, although in different amounts. Another consideration is that leisure should give opportunity for expression of interests and capacities rather than merely supply entertainment or "pass-time." The importance of expression is emphasized elsewhere in this book, particularly in those sections dealing with catharsis and projective techniques.

While some attention is given in the schools to the development of leisure-time interests which can be functional in adult life, the major emphasis is on mass entertainment. Physical-education and health authorities are aware of the deficiencies, but little progress has been made in the last twenty or thirty years. In fact, the trend seems to be toward developing championship teams which can draw huge crowds to witness the skill of a few specially endowed and specially trained performers. The fact that these few may go on to become highly paid professionals does not free the schools of the obligation they have to teach a more constructive use of leisure time for the school population at large.

Teachers can help, in this dilemma, by cultivating a wide variety of interests themselves, by making use of a sensitiveness to the interests of their students, and by encouraging the development of those interests which are suited to individuals who differ in talents and background.

9. "All youth need to develop respect for other persons." This need is at the very core of mental health. Personal success in any one occupation is to a large degree determined by one's ability to get along with other persons. "Getting along" involves the establishment of respect for the rights, interests, wishes, welfare, skills, and shortcomings of others. Respect, in its turn, grows out of an intimate acquaintance with the other person and his problems. Fortunately, teachers are widely aware of the existence of this need and are attempting to meet it in various ways. No more need be said here than that the working out of democratic ways of living in the school, with all the ramifications of the meaning of democracy, is effective in establishing this fundamental respect.

Respect for others is basic not only to occupational success, but also to the maintaining of effective personal relations in daily associations apart from work—dealing with friends, neighbors, and members of the family. These lessons, too, are being taught in the schools, not so effectively as could be desired, but at least with some approach to accomplishing their aims.

Finally, respect for others contributes to personal mental health by opening up those opportunities for "getting outside oneself" of which psychologists and psychiatrists speak so urgently.

Two responsibilities of teachers stand out. First, the significance of respect for others should form the basis of much class discussion and illustration. Second, the organization of class activities should be so designed as to offer opportunities for exercising respect. This can be done by sharing responsibility, by calling for various skills and knowledges, and by giving recognition to the contribution of each class member. Thus, again, is the superiority of democratic procedures, at least from the mental hygiene viewpoint, made evident.

10. "All youth need to grow in their ability to think rationally." This is another need which has long been recognized. The difficulty in getting it worked into the plan of education is that too often it has been regarded as an inseparable companion of learning. Yet the fact is that schools will never be able to anticipate in their programs of instruction *all* the problems that students will meet in the course of their lives. Education by rote methods is quite sure to end in failure. To remedy this is not a simple undertaking, but some constructive approaches to the remedy are known.

One of the major handicaps in the development of thinking is that teachers are too eager and too ready to give answers to problems. This tends to make the student dependent upon authority for his conclusions. Actually, the teacher's desire to supply answers deprives the adolescent of an opportunity to exercise his own initiative and resourcefulness in seeking answers. Giving answers also involves the hazard of formulating conclusions which, with changing conditions, will need to be altered. If the student has arrived at his own conclusions by himself, the experience will have helped him to develop the research techniques needed for modifying conclusions. It is often a waste of time to furnish answers when the limited experience of the learner has not even prepared him to ask the questions that call for those answers.

This does not mean that the traditional emphasis upon facts and precise knowledge is passé. The truth is that both the asking of questions and the answering of them involves acquiring data. Teachers must continue to emphasize the need for knowledge and the development of vocabulary skills, but they must also be able to plan opportunities for putting into use the facts learned so that they will help to solve problems that concern the adolescents' own lives and immediate situations.

HOW TEACHERS CAN HELP ADOLESCENTS ACHIEVE MENTAL HEALTH

Understand the Meaning of Behavior. It is recognized that much maladjustment, whether in children or in adolescents, is due to a lack of understanding on the part of parents. Further, that some teachers lack adequate understanding and are unwilling to become concerned about the problems of adolescents must be admitted. A first step toward remedy-

ing this handicap is for teachers to learn to interpret the behavior manifestations of individuals. The parallel columns below indicate the kinds of interpretation that teachers might well attempt to make; but it is necessary to keep in mind that, because of the wide variations which exist between individuals, the suggested interpretations cannot be definitive. Moreover, it is vital to recognize that the majority of adolescents will not show a marked degree of variation from what is deemed to be normal. The following material, then, suggests ways of becoming aware of those who do need special help and understanding.

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
Pretending to be ill, sudden outbursts of temper, crying, pouting and sulking.	Lack of opportunity to accept responsibility, no necessity to accept consequences for one's own acts.
Engaging in fantasy, rationalizing failures, tense and sensitive.	An individual who is faced by problems which are too difficult.
Shyness, lack of initiative, complacency with present status.	Has experienced repeated failure, lacks social success, has no outstanding ability.
Dissatisfied and unhappy in present situation.	Possesses physical defects or lacks ability to perform expected tasks.
Loss of appetite, sleeplessness, tics, stuttering, excessive tiredness, or dizzy spells.	Glandular imbalance, inadequate diet, excessive demands, academic and social inadequacy.
Is lonely, has no corps of friends, is isolated from the group; has no confidants.	Lacks opportunity for companionship, feels inadequate, may undervalue or overvalue self.
Quarrels, shows no respect for rights or opinions of others, has little concern for welfare of others.	Limited social experience, has been pampered at home or school, has few responsibilities.
Does not apply himself to schoolwork, has no clearly defined goals.	Has not perceived the significance of schoolwork, has not earned the approval of others.

The necessity for understanding each adolescent (that is, knowing him intimately) can be readily seen by shifting the positions of the items in the foregoing columns. That is, another possible interpretation for "Pretending to be ill, sudden outbursts of temper, crying, pouting and sulking" might very well be "An individual who is faced by problems which are too difficult" or "Has experienced repeated failure, lacks social success, has no outstanding ability." The intention here is merely to indi-

cate the need for interpreting behavior as a first step in understanding the adolescent. As was explained in the previous chapter, behavior is the individual's way of showing that his needs have or have not been met.

The column headed "Interpretation" requires but little reflection before it will reveal ways of getting at the causes of behavior. Gradually, but nonetheless surely, responsibility must be put upon the individual. The individual's duties and obligations must be scaled to his present level of development. Opportunity must be given to develop skills which contribute to the welfare of the group and opportunity for social intercourse must be provided. Physical defects must be treated or the person must be helped to realize the actual way in which others regard such defects. Certainly not the least of the things that can be done to interpret behavior at a functional level is to discuss, explain, and illustrate the meaning and importance of goals for development. /

The School Can Help Provide Practice in Social Relationships. Many of the problems of adolescents center about the necessity for making harmonious social adjustments. No matter how good or how bad the home environment may have been, these young persons need to have contrasting contacts, to meet different demands, to adjust to varied mores, to perform diverse functions, and to satisfy shifting judgments. Adolescence is defined by some as a period of transition. The perplexity of the adolescent is largely due to the fact that he is at an in-between age. Some of the reasons why he is so in need of help are revealed in the following quotation.

At this time, the individual is neither fish nor fowl, neither a child nor an adult. He is gradually leaving behind childish behavior, just as he sheds a childish appearance in favor of that characteristic of a mature individual. . . . He is no longer a child and yet not a man. He has no status in society, nor does society seem to understand him. By some he is judged in terms of standards accepted for the childhood years; by others he is expected to conform to society's standards for adults.⁵

Teachers can help make the transition a smooth one by giving the adolescent a chance to act on an adult level. His views can be recognized on problems that are discussed in class. He can be given an opportunity to recount his experiences. He can exercise initiative in the formulation of plans for the class. He can be made responsible for finding information. Class organization that emphasizes a large degree of student participation is particularly helpful. Committees, panel discussions, group projects, and class experimentation and visitation will afford many opportunities for social contacts in the form of delegating responsibility, dis-

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3. By permission of the publisher.

cussing procedures, presenting and criticizing data, and evaluating what has been done.

Wider social contacts can be made possible through the encouragement of the so-called "extracurricular" activities. Clubs, dancing hours, hobby groups, athletic contests, and student government have all been utilized as means for social experience. These, of course, make demands on the time and energy of the teacher. Although he is not expected to do the work involved, the need for supervision and guidance must be met. And the teacher must be artful in his approach, because it is just such supervision that the adolescent wishes to outgrow. Therefore, care must be exercised to let the supervision partake of the nature of guidance rather than that of domination and direction.

The point at which teachers can be of maximum help has already been mentioned. It has to do with the establishment of a high degree of teacher-pupil rapport. Since this is so fundamental an aspect that it is a concern of the entire book, no more need be said here than that the teacher is in an advantageous position for securing the rapport, because he is the adult outside the family circle with whom the adolescent has closest contact. If the teacher has a genuine interest in young people and will seek to understand them through gaining knowledge about them, he will be offering the most salutary help available for establishing harmonious social relationships. The big item of cost is that of *time*. But it pays a high rate of interest.

Help Them Establish Goals—Formulate a Philosophy. It is not necessary or even desirable for adolescents to have a fixed and final philosophy. They should, however, be thinking about some tentative goals and be molding a tentative framework for their personal philosophy. They will have goals, whether or not teachers give them any help. They need help, however, in choosing goals which are appropriate and they need help in thinking through their goals, to see that conflicting objectives are reduced in number. Everyone has goals, but not all people have thought through them in order to give them the consistency that may justify the use of the word "philosophy" in reference to them. Teachers can aid in the process of the evaluating and systemizing of youth's objectives.)

A starting point, but only a starting point, around which the formulation of a philosophy could revolve might well be the three points following: (1) Attitudes and habits to avoid. Discouragement, excuse making, suspicion, selfishness, self-pity, and laziness are factors which make adjustment more difficult than it need be. The pupils should be led to name others, through group discussion. They can be led to think these things through by attempting to list them in the order of seriousness. (2) Attitudes and habits to cultivate. Optimism, perspective, humor, responsibility, willingness to work, and friendliness are factors which tend

to facilitate adjustment. What is the source of such attitudes? How can individuals develop these qualities in themselves? What is their relative merit? Questions such as these are stimulating to the critical thinking that leads to a genuine and productive philosophy. (3) Problems that should be considered. Questionnaire analysis of problems about which adolescents are rightfully concerned include the following: scholastic work, vocational selection and preparation, marriage, the place of religion in full living, living with one's family, privileges and responsibilities of citizenship, desirable personal habits, the relative value of temporary goals, and the major purposes of life. It is not expected that all will come to the same conclusions, but discussing the problems will help revise and systematize the thinking of each individual.

The School and Better Personal Adjustment. The place of the teacher and the school in helping adolescents achieve better mental health is well summarized in the following quotation:

It is now generally recognized that the years of childhood and adolescence are of crucial importance in establishing good behavioral patterns and habits, for these patterns and habits will determine to a large degree the extent to which one is satisfactorily adjusted. . . .

Regardless of the causal sources of pupil maladjustment, teachers and the school systems which they represent have a distinct responsibility for recognizing the adjustment problems of students, understanding the significance of such problems, and working with the students in alleviating their difficulties. This is primarily a *responsibility for working with individuals*; but, where wide group deviations in unfavorable adjustment aspects are observable, an examination of general school practices should be undertaken to determine whether they may be contributing to such deviations and how they can be corrected in this respect. Remedial actions might incorporate a number of general changes, such as an *increased emphasis on better student-teacher relationships* and better teacher-parent relationships, more knowledge and appreciation on the part of teachers of the general background of the students, courses for parents in helping them understand the problems of youth, and *curricular additions and changes* to provide more highly differentiated opportunities to suit the variation in individual aptitudes.⁶

Meeting the mental health needs of adolescents is part and parcel of effective educational procedures. School methods, curriculums, and teacher-pupil relationships can be most advantageous when behavior is wisely interpreted, when provisions are made for practice in social rela-

⁶ Wilson H. Ivins, William H. Fox, and David Segel, "A Study of a Secondary School Program in Light of Characteristics and Needs of Youth," *Bulletin of the School of Education, Indiana University*, Vol. 25, No. 6 (November, 1949), p. 18. By permission of the publishers. (Italics not in original.)

tionships, and when teachers act on their responsibility to help adolescents formulate a basis for an evolving philosophy of personal living.

SUMMARY

The needs of adolescents are basically the same as those of children and adults. Some of the basic needs, however, are felt more acutely during the adolescent years as the individual comes closer to the independence of genuine adulthood.

The National Education Association has formulated a list of adolescent needs in terms of the immediate as well as in terms of future life activities of youth. These needs include the following: (1) All youth need to develop salable skills. (2) All youth need to develop and maintain good health and physical fitness. (3) All youth need to understand the rights and duties of the citizen in a democratic society. (4) All youth need to understand the significance of the family for the individual and society. (5) All youth need to know how to purchase and use goods and services intelligently. (6) All youth need to understand the influence of science on human life. (7) All youth need an appreciation of literature, art, music, and nature. (8) All youth need to be able to use their leisure time well and to budget it wisely. (9) All youth need to develop respect for other persons. (10) All youth need to grow in their ability to think rationally.

Other needs of adolescents, which might be considered to be modifications of the above list, include the following: (1) Adolescents need to be treated as though they were adults. (2) They need to have help in the making of peer adjustments. (3) They have a need to adjust to the adults whom they know most intimately, with the exception of their parents; that is, their teachers. (4) They need to study and formulate personal purposes or objectives. (5) They need to establish feelings of worth through the development of skills appropriate to their role in society. (6) They need to understand themselves and the fact that their problems are to a large extent shared by their peers. (7) They need to begin thinking about the problems involved in marriage and the establishment of their own homes.

Teachers can aid in the satisfaction of such needs as are listed in the previous paragraphs by studying the nature and meaning of the behavior of adolescents. They can help to provide the social contacts that are so important in all areas of adjustment—personal, as well as vocational. They can help by encouraging adolescents to think through their objectives sufficiently clearly so that a foundation for an evolving philosophy of life is achieved. These things may require some changes in curriculum and methods, but they will pay big dividends in terms of better mental health for adolescents.)

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Write a several-page account of some difficulty you experienced as an adolescent. What help did you receive? How might you have been more effectively helped? What understandings would have been beneficial?
2. With some adolescent whom you know only slightly, engage in serious conversation. Get his views on marriage, military service, occupation. Are his views sound? What are your reactions to his perspective?
3. Outline a plan for helping youth to purchase and use goods and services intelligently.
4. What do you consider to be the three or four most important steps in helping youth develop respect for other persons?
5. How far can a teacher go in treating adolescents as adults? What limitations must be observed?
6. Evaluate the view of high-school Parent-Teacher Associations which is presented in the chapter.
7. Suggest some approaches to the marriage dilemma which faces youth today.
8. What organizations are there in your school and community which are designed to facilitate healthy contacts for youth?
9. How would you answer the individual who says, "Let's keep away from the subject of marriage. They'll get the idea soon enough anyway."
10. Defend or criticize the statement that teachers are in a more advantageous position to influence youth than are their parents.
11. Try to get several adolescents to make a formal statement, in a page or two, of their aims in life. Do they appear to need much help?
12. Make a list of ten or twelve facts or generalizations about marriage which you think the adolescent should know.

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

BLOS, PETER, *The Adolescent Personality*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1941. 517 pp.

A much needed approach to the study of the adolescent—through the study of individuals—is used in this book. After twenty-five pages of orientation material, the book deals with four case studies of adolescents—Betty, Paul, Mary, and Joe. The development of skills, attitudes, ideals, and habits is studied in a biographical context.

ECKERT, RALPH G., *So You Think It's Love*, Public Affairs Pamphlet 161, New York: Public Affairs Committee, Inc., 1950. 32 pp.

Material in this booklet can be used by teacher and adolescents as the basis for discussing the problems of dating, necking, petting, and going steady. The role of parents in the establishment of ideals is stressed. Pamphlet 127, *Keeping Up with Teen-agers*, by Evelyn Millis Duvall, is also recommended for study and discussion.

MENNINGER, WILLIAM C., *Understanding Yourself*, Life Adjustment Booklet, Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1948. 52 pp.

This material can advantageously be placed in the hands of adolescents. Common problems, reactions to them, sensible approaches toward solution are discussed. Common defense mechanisms are defined. Anecdotal accounts and clear photographs add to the readability of the booklet.

PRESTON, GEORGE H., *The Substance of Mental Health*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1943. 147 pp.

The material of this book is serious but the presentation is humorous and stimulating. The author likens the achievement of mental health to inoculation, immunization, and vaccination. These are achieved in psychological realms by allowing the adolescent freedom to experience and grow. The causes of behavior in terms of parents, teachers, and situations are stressed.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Attitudes and Health, Coronet Films, Inc., 65 East South Water, Chicago 1. (10 min, BW, sd.)

A discussion of psychosomatic illness leads Marvin Baker to think of his own mental health. Disappointment over failure to make the basketball team and subsequent poor schoolwork leads him to rethink his attitudes. He learns that doing well does not need to mean succeeding in everything.

Dating Do's and Don'ts, Coronet. (14 min, BW&C, sd.)

Problems of dating from calling up to get the date to saying good night. The couple is shown having a good time on their date. Situations are approached in several different ways.

Shy Guy, Coronet. (13 min, BW&C, sd.)

Suggestions are given for dealing constructively with the problem of shyness in an adolescent. The lad learns some of the secrets which help him become one of the crowd.

Social Development, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42nd St., New York 36. (16 min, BW, sd.)

In showing social behavior at various age levels, the film deals with emotional conflicts that come with the "gang age," when home and family are no longer the center of the individual's world.

PART TWO

MENTAL HYGIENE IN THE CLASSROOM

6

TEACHER PERSONALITY AND PUPIL BEHAVIOR

"AS THE teacher so is the school." This oft-repeated statement is coming to have increasing significance as study after study confirms and reconfirms it. Despite beautiful school buildings, up-to-date textbooks, liberal laboratory facilities, abundant instructional aids, and huge libraries, Mark Hopkins's definition of a school is still noteworthy; *i.e.*, a school is a log with a teacher on one end and a pupil on the other. The best of facilities count for little if the teachers are inadequate in personality or preparation—but particularly if they are inadequate in personality factors. Those are sad chapters in the history of education which reveal that teachers have ever been anything but the best people in the community. Yet there have been times when teaching positions were granted to people to keep them from being charity cases, when unemployable ministers were permitted to teach, and when anyone with more than ordinary education was thought capable of being a teacher. Even today the cliché is not forgotten, "Those who can, do; those who can't, teach," and there are actually some teachers who can smile when they hear it!

Books which deal with the subject of mental health in the schools invariably stress teacher personality as the most significant factor in classroom atmosphere. This volume is no exception. Even though a specific chapter is devoted to Teacher Personality and Pupil Behavior, there is no lack of emphasis on this outstanding relationship in other chapters. Sometimes it is dealt with directly, but throughout it is at least strongly implied. Certainly the suggestions made in other parts of the book are without meaning until they are translated into action and behavior by the teacher and thus become an expression of his personality. Whether we wish it or not, the most vital aspect of mental hygiene in the schools revolves about the personality of the teacher. The essential prerequisite for the maintenance of our nation's emotional and mental maturity is a body of properly trained and personally adequate teachers.

MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER PERSONALITY

Meaning of Personality. "The time-honored practice of beginning study with a definition of what is to be studied is not always so *scientifically* honorable. If we can completely define an object, there is not much left to be explored and studied!"¹ While we might agree with this



Why is it so necessary to work with individual pupils? What personality characteristics are needed by the teacher for success in such work? How do teacher-pupil relationships bear on mental health?

statement, it should not keep us from attempting to formulate a concept of what personality is. Certainly, personality is such a complicated and intricate thing that exact definition would require pages rather than a sentence or two; but a concept is possible. There are certain aspects of the concept which seem rather generally to be accepted.

(Some of the factors which combine to make up personality are physique, appearance, potential capacities, developed abilities, interests, ambitions, habits, and temperament.) The combinations of these factors

¹ By permission from *Personality*, by Raymond B. Cattell. 1950, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., p. 2.

which condition one's social effectiveness and his inner harmony are of no less importance. Personality thus includes one's hates, his loves, his fears, his likes, and his dislikes. Louis P. Thorpe has put together many of these factors of our concept within a brief definition, "Personality, it should be clear by now, is synonymous with the idea of the organismic functioning of the total individual, including all his various verbally separated aspects, such as intellect, character, drive, emotionalized attitudes, interests, sociability, and personal appearance, as well as his general social effectiveness."²

Obviously, there are many facets of personality with which teachers must be concerned. Social competence is only one. One's attitude toward himself, one's motivations, one's interests, and one's knowledges must all be taken into account. Why is teacher personality so pervasive? How does teacher personality affect pupil growth? What are some of the personality traits of teachers which have greatest significance? How can these traits be developed? Answers to these questions will clarify the importance of a teacher's personality and serve to illustrate his influence.

School Contacts Are Continuous and Intimate. No doubt the author would have been well advised to assert that the essential prerequisite of good mental health for the nation is a multitude of healthy-minded, mature parents (see the first page of this chapter). That is true; but the school is a more logical place for the beginning of better mental health than is the home. Teachers have better opportunities to learn about mental hygiene than do the vast majority of parents. In fact, the study of mental hygiene is often required for certification of teachers, while no such requirement exists for parenthood. Second to the home, in regard to continuous and intimate personal contacts, is the school. By the time a child reaches school age, he actually has, in terms of intimate contact, more hours with his teachers than he has with his parents, since he does not spend all of his out-of-school time with his parents. The significance of school contacts is further enhanced by the fact that the child comes to school to learn. Typically, he is receptive and eager to acquire added skills and to develop new viewpoints. Because of the amount of time in school, the intimacy of school contacts, and the nature of school activities, it is inevitable that the teacher's personality and behavior will have a profound effect upon pupil behavior.

Personal Contacts Are a Learning Avenue. It is not necessary to go to psychologists to learn that *one teaches what he is* perhaps even more than he teaches what he says. Observation of those about us will demonstrate unequivocally that the assertion is valid. (A boy will walk with

² By permission from *Psychological Foundations of Personality*, by Louis P. Thorpe. 1938, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., p. 534.

the same shuffling, swinging, or strutting gait as his father. It takes a long time to eradicate "He don't," "That there thing," and "That guy, he . . ." if the child repeatedly hears such expressions in his home. On the other hand, formal instruction is largely superfluous if the child's intimates speak correctly. Visits to two classrooms will give evidence of this kind of response. The same pupils under two different instructors act differently. Observation may first be directed to either the pupils or the teacher—the results are complementary. If the teacher is tense, irritable, dominating, or careless, the pupils will show evidence of tensions, being cross, lacking in social grace, and of producing slovenly work. If we first look at pupils and see them to be industrious, cheerful, energetic, confident, and cooperative, we can then turn to the teacher and see a poised, happy individual who knows where he is going and how he intends to get there.

Another evidence that personal contacts are a learning avenue is that vigorous learning situations are a matter of contagion as well as premeditated desire to learn. The teacher, for this reason, should be a learner with the pupil. This does not mean that previous knowledge of subject matter is unimportant, but it does mean that the teacher should not purport to know it all. A teacher can be a competent authority without being dogmatically authoritative. Some teachers stimulate pupil responsibility in learning by saying frankly, "I'm not sure about that. Will you look it up and let me know," "I thought . . . ; but you see what you can find," or "I remember only vaguely that — (author) mentioned it in the book, — (title)." Unless a teacher is consciously attempting to create a contagious learning situation, pupils can quickly get the idea that the easiest way to learn is to wait for him to tell them. The teacher's participation in discussions, without dominating them, is conducive to a good learning atmosphere. Teachers who welcome a viewpoint forwarded by a pupil, show appreciation for supplementary materials that the pupils furnish, and are themselves gathering new data are providing a setting for contagious learning.

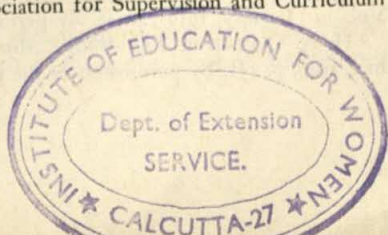
(Some of the things a child learns from his teacher are imparted unintentionally. These learnings would include such reactions as quarrelsomeness, careless work habits, and discourteous treatment of others. The pupil will as quickly learn to be cooperative, systematic, polite, and purposeful. Other things he may learn as the result of conscious imitation. Kindergarten children reveal this imitative learning when they return home and "play school." The child who is the make-believe teacher of the moment imitates the voice, action, and statements of the real teacher. Imitation at this age level and much of that in the elementary grades will have little effect on enduring behavior patterns but that little is worth

considering when it relates to the child's attitude toward continuous learning. Imitation at the secondary level is a more serious matter. In Chapter 5, *Special Needs of Adolescents*, it is pointed out that they consciously seek a pattern for their own conduct in some more mature person. Since they are attempting to outgrow their dependence upon their parents, the model is not likely to be father or mother. The other adults whom they know most intimately are their teachers and since teachers, by virtue of their position if for no other reason, have a certain prestige, the teacher becomes a model in numerous instances. This is usually a fortunate situation, because the imitated teacher will be one who is well liked—one of those who create a wholesome classroom atmosphere through the influence of their personality attributes. It sometimes happens, however, that less desirable personality traits are imitated, because the youngster sees in some teacher a roughness, toughness, or sophistication that he is inclined to admire. At times unapproved behavior of high-school pupils is claimed to be justified on the ground that teachers have set an example by behaving in the same way.

Teacher Personality Presents a Goal for Growth. The all-inclusive purpose of the school is to promote the optimum growth for each pupil. Learning, as one phase of growth, is best accomplished when goals are clearly defined. Many pupils at all levels, and particularly at the high-school age, make better growth if their teachers provide a model which is worthy of emulation. Basically, all children want to grow, to be independent, to develop competencies, and to achieve status. Such a declaration of independence can be heard in the two-year-old's cry, "Do it ownself"; in the six-year-old's protest, "You don't have to show me"; and in the adolescent's argument, "Frank's mother lets him. . . ." But they can't always do it themselves and they do need to be shown. Furthermore, they copy models—both inadvertently and intentionally. Unwittingly they identify themselves with their parents, with older brothers and sisters and more mature relatives, with movie heroes, and with their teachers.

This is no process of imitation whereby the child imitates specific and discrete behaviors in order to achieve an immediate goal. As far as we can tell, it is largely an unconscious process of coming to "feel like" the "model" person with whom he identifies and to perceive situations in the same way the "model" perceives them. Often there is imitation of specific mannerisms or attitudes, but these are the *result* of the child's identification; they are not the basis of the identification.³

³ *Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*, 1950 Yearbook of National Education Association, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C., 1950, p. 147. By permission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.



Whether the model helps shape the developing child by a process of unconscious identification or of purposeful imitation is only a matter of academic interest. The important thing is that the model be worthy of emulation. This does not imply that the child will be, or should be, a carbon copy of the teacher. Nor is it a matter of the teacher's choice. Whether or not he wishes to be one, he is a model, at least in part. Therefore, he should manifest such desirable characteristics as an open-minded attitude toward people and situations; a healthy regard for others, accepting them for what they are in terms of the influences which have shaped them; and a calm approach to disturbing problems. H. A. Overstreet asserts that schools have the responsibility for providing an opportunity for youngsters to associate themselves with groups that promote maturing. This involves acting in a mature manner—with regard to the exercise of authority, the raising of important issues and the ignoring of insignificant ones, and the development of a plan to promote the growth of the mind.⁴ Further insight into the teacher's responsibility for providing a goal for maturity is given in his book, *The Mature Mind*.

A mature adult role, properly speaking, can never be one of passive and uncritical acceptance. It must be one of creative evaluation. The mature adult is a thinking adult. He is an adult who meditates values, considers the bearings of things, tries to foresee consequences, tries to get rid as best he can of "the personal equation" that makes him see what his fears and hopes tell him to see, imagines better ways of doing things. A mature adult, in brief, is a mind actively confronting life and trying to do what needs to be done to improve the life-situation.

The schools could take upon themselves no more significant task than to prepare the young to become mature adults. If they were to adopt this function, however, they might have to adopt also a new educational commandment: Seek first the building of a *mind*.⁵

Growth is inevitable for school children. Its direction and rate depend on the maturity of teachers and the kind of model they provide. Thus, the statement, "As the teacher so is the school," is illustrated and emphasized.

FACTORS IN TEACHER PERSONALITY BEARING ON PUPIL BEHAVIOR

Clothing. Personality, as can be learned from the definition, is not something which is put on. Yet what is worn is a reflection of the per-

⁴ H. A. Overstreet, "The Mature Mind," *National Education Association Journal*, Vol. 39 (January, 1950), p. 48. By permission of the National Education Association.

⁵ H. A. Overstreet, *The Mature Mind*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1949, p. 251. By permission of the publisher.

sonality and a partial revelation of the individual. Clothing, if not an aspect of personality, is nevertheless a factor which influences the behavior of youngsters. Children in the kindergarten and primary grades often openly comment on the teacher's dress, the costume jewelry she wears, or her shoes. Pupils in the intermediate grades may speak less frankly but their interpersonal remarks reveal that clothes are noticed. High-school students are similarly observant.

(The teacher's clothing is a factor in pupil behavior,) not only from the standpoint of possible imitation and emulation—particularly, for high-school pupils—but more significantly as an element of classroom atmosphere. Cleanliness and color help generate a feeling of cheer. Comfort is desirable because it helps condition the teacher's feeling about his work. The comment "My shoes are killing me" is often superfluous, except as it indicates the specific cause of ill humor. Moreover, practical psychologists often explain that confidence in the style and quality of the clothing worn immediately affects a person's confidence in himself. Investment in wearing apparel, dry cleaning, and professional repair of clothes will pay dividends in terms of one's confidence and in terms of the role played in creating desirable classroom atmosphere.

Voice. One's voice, even more than his clothing, is a reflection of his personality. A high-pitched, strident voice expressing curt commands is indicative of a tense, uncertain teacher. A low-pitched, well-modulated voice reveals poise and confidence in self and in pupils. We may say, in mental hygiene terms, that poor voice is a symptom of some difficulty. Hence, improvement of voice becomes a matter of analysis and remediation of underlying causes. These causes may be found among the gamut of mental hygiene difficulties—home conditions, marital situation, uncertainty of position, poor physical health, and the like. Poor voice in teachers, like misbehavior in pupils, is likely to be a symptom of difficulty in adjustment. Looking to the immediate situation, such indications as lack of understanding of children, poorly planned and ill-prepared work, friction with other staff members, and lack of faith in the worthwhileness of the teaching responsibility might well be factors worthy of examination.

After the causes of poor voice have been analyzed, the symptom itself may be successfully attacked. It would be advantageous to have the aid of a competent instructor; the speech and dramatics instructor will usually be willing to help. A tape or wire recorder can serve by giving the speaker a chance to hear himself as others hear him. If these aids are lacking, it is still possible to bring about improvement by examining habits of speaking. Is pitch too high? It may be if there is a tendency to shout the pupils. Is the voice harsh? Straining to be heard may be the cause. Is there a strident quality manifest? Perhaps the ideal of democratic

procedures has not been accepted. These questions and appropriate answers to them will start one on the road to improvement—which requires analysis and the desire to develop. Improvement is desirable because “Quality of voice is an important factor in the success of the teacher. It helps determine the attitude and the response of the pupils. It contributes to the atmosphere of the classroom as well as to the tempo of its activities.”⁶

A Smile. The ability to smile is not something superficial. It is another way of revealing the underlying personality, but it may also be a matter of habit. It is likely that some persons who smile little are no less happy than those who smile readily and often. Nevertheless, teachers would do well to cultivate the habit of smiling easily, because it has a two-way effect. In the first place, it is contagious. Infants, as well as children and adults, respond to a smile with a smile. Youngsters whose teachers give this manifestation of a radiant personality find their schoolwork more interesting (perhaps, because they feel recognition) and more pleasant. Furthermore, a smile has the effect of autosuggestion; *i.e.*, wearing a smile as a pretense will tend to produce a more pleasant feeling, but the inner feeling must be cultivated. “The smile need not be actually present, but if a person’s state of mind is such that he may easily smile, he is in a splendid condition of relaxation. The attitude wins a warm social approval and prevents wearing of the nerves.”⁷

(A smile is regarded by child psychologists as one of the first evidences of the development of social behavior. It is a universally understood evidence of friendliness. A smile can do much to establish the kind of classroom rapport that makes work and learning pleasant and effective. Admittedly, this matter of smiling is a minute detail, but it is the multiplicity of minute details that produces the over-all condition known as a healthy classroom atmosphere.)

Accent on the Positive. If the teacher’s personality is to produce a wholesomely stimulating effect on pupil growth, it is necessary that emphasis be placed on the positive. This means that the teacher must have sufficient maturity to make it easy for him to perceive the personality assets of his pupils. Such teachers can find in the most troublesome pupils some virtue, some point of superiority, or some valuable attribute. When a youngster complains, “The other kids don’t like me,” and the teacher answers, “But I like you. You are always polite and kind to me,” he is accenting the positive. He may be fully aware that this youngster is continually picking fights and teasing smaller youngsters. The positive

⁶ Reprinted by permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc., from *Teaching in the Secondary School*, by M. L. Goetting, copyright, 1942, by Prentice-Hall, Inc., p. 38.

⁷ Reprinted by permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc., from *Mental Hygiene*, by William H. Mikesell, copyright, 1939, by Prentice-Hall, Inc., p. 364.

can be accented by reminding the boy who is slow in arithmetic that he is one of the best basketball players in the class, by indicating that a poor reader is capable of drawing beautifully, and by finding some reason for a compliment, even if it be partially fictional.

The manifestation of confidence in pupils is a way of accenting the positive. The teacher may say, "I know this is a difficult assignment; but I also know that this class is perfectly able to do the work." It is necessary to have confidence in the *intentions* of students, as well as confidence in their ability. When an unpleasant incident arises, such as the destruction of a globe, it is necessary to believe that this may quite as likely be an accident as an act of maliciousness. A fair and open-minded investigation of the incident is more conducive to a wholesome classroom atmosphere than is the expression of anger, disgust, and contempt.

Faith in the ability of students to conduct their affairs with prudence and aplomb accents the positive; whereas, the conviction that adult leadership and dominance are requisite to the conduct of student affairs would stress the negative. An example of stressing the negative is found in the case of a high-school principal who was convinced that students were unable to handle finances accurately and honestly. Monies collected by the sale of football and basketball tickets were handled entirely by teachers. Tickets to the Junior Prom also were handled by teachers. The treasurers of clubs and classes merely reported the results that were handed to them from the principal's office. All purchases by any student organization had to be approved by the principal and then were purchased by him from the establishments which he favored. Student resentment was strong and was manifested by destruction of school property, by frequent "sneak days," on which the entire student body would absent itself from school. It is a principle of sound cocurricular administration that all funds should be subject to close supervision by the school staff; but that does not mean that students are incapable of participation. School administrators who accent the positive take the view that students are capable of honest administration of such funds and, though subject to supervision, are given the opportunity to do so. In fact, such experiences are regarded as a vital part of their learning opportunities.

Faith in the ability of students to conduct their own affairs is evidenced in those situations where students are encouraged to organize and administer their own student government, their classroom organizations, and their cocurricular activities. It seems to be almost a characteristic of human nature that individuals do as much, and only as much, as is expected of them. Perhaps this is because our own egos force us to confirm the faith that others have in us. At any rate, accent on the positive tends to bring out the best that is in a person—the school child included.

Praise instead of criticism, stimulating suggestions in place of sarcasm, a smile substituted for a scowl, and hope instead of discouragement—these are means of accenting the positive. The significance of all this is that teachers must view pupils as unique individuals. They must realize that objectionable behavior is a symptom. They should know that the intentions of pupils are not always synonymous with their actions. Certainly all teachers must appreciate the fact that growth is a process which does not consist entirely of forward progress. Perhaps the most important requirement of all is that teachers should cultivate a realistic but optimistic viewpoint of teaching as a means toward the end of developing mentally healthy adults—not just school children.

Competence without Dogmatism. If the thesis that learning how to learn and to think is more important than the accumulation of facts is accepted, an important factor in creating a desirable classroom atmosphere is to avoid dogmatism. One can be well informed, thoroughly versed, and competent in his field without trying to show that he "knows it all." In fact, feeling sure of oneself instills a confidence that makes it possible to respect difficult views and challenging counterstatements. Thus, competence and tolerance go hand in hand; and lack of assurance breeds dogmatism.)

Experienced teachers studying the subject of mental hygiene have reported that they had previously tried to cover their ignorance by assuming an authoritative air. Many of us may have had the experience of taking a class from someone who was not thoroughly acquainted with the literature in his field and finding that the teacher, nevertheless, was overpositive in his statements. This situation had the effect of creating a tension which made an unpleasant atmosphere in the class and of throwing doubt on the truth of those statements of the instructor which we were not sure were incorrect. The same phenomenon can also be noticed among school children when an obviously misinformed child shouts more vehemently than the others that he is correct.

Competence in one's field, or lack of it, produces an effect on oneself as well as on others. In his early teaching days, the writer sometimes had the feeling that on some days the students seemed particularly inert, that they came to class ill-prepared, were uninterested in the lesson, and were particularly attentive to distracting influences. Reflection and analysis revealed that the fault was never with the students but with the teacher. On days when he went to class unprepared, did not know just what direction the lesson would take, did not have alternative activities in mind, and hoped that no tangential questions would be asked, the students were uninterested and irresponsible. On the other hand, when he was well prepared and had so much to give that it seemed there could

hardly be enough time, the students were so eager that even more time was occupied than had been planned.

Student teachers and beginning teachers who prepare just one lesson for their first day frequently find that they have not planned nearly enough for the hour. Those who heeded the advice to be ready to cover three lessons reported that they did not even get over the material for one lesson. If we are asked to give a talk and to choose our own subject, our allotted time seems too short; but if the topic is assigned and if it happens to be on a subject with which we are not thoroughly familiar, it seems that the time is too long. Feelings of uncertainty which produce tension in us also have a direct effect on our audience, as is evidenced by restlessness and lack of attention.

Another argument against dogmatism is that schools in a democracy can be justified only when they help students to learn to think.

The highest form of education involves the development of capacity for criticism and evaluation, of independence of thought and action.

From all this it follows that the aim of education should be to equip the individual the more wisely to reflect upon and to guide his own experience. This is the instrumental function of thinking. Indeed, thinking can have no other functions than those of critical analysis, decision, action, verification, and evaluation.⁸

None of these functions, critical analysis, decision, action, etc., can be exercised in the face of dogmatism and authoritarianism. Nor can they work effectively in the absence of knowledge and information. Thinking demands both freedom to think and facts with which to think. This highest form of education can be implemented only by teachers who are competent without being dogmatic.

Tolerance. There seems to be a certain degree of intolerance to the word tolerance. Tolerance is defined as the quality of endurance, ability to put up with. Teachers need more than tolerance when dealing with pupils; they need to have admiration and respect for them. More is needed than putting up with Johnny's dirty hands and nails and with Alice's slowness in learning. The mitigating circumstances which accompany such characteristics need to be understood.

It takes a genuinely mature person to understand a child's assertions, "You're not fair," "I hate reading," and "I see no earthly reason why I should study ancient history." A teacher of literature responded to a boy's protest, "I hate poetry," with just such maturity. She said with surprise, "Why, that's just because you don't understand it." She proceeded

⁸ By permission from *Education for Democracy in Our Time*, by Jesse H. Newlon, 1939, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., p. 84.

to explain the meaning of the words and sentences and then read several passages aloud. Tears came to the adolescent's eyes and the teacher said, "Why, you appreciate this much more sincerely than the average student does." His original remark was more than tolerated, it was respected. He in turn respected the teacher and was put on the road to respecting poetry.

The negative emotional expressions of children are only symptoms. Teachers can learn to regard them as such by being maturely tolerant.

If you are yourself emotionally adjusted you are better able to accept rather than resent negative emotional expressions in children. If you can accept objectively and without personal involvements such statements as, "I hate school," "I don't like you," or "Why do you always 'pick' on me?" you can better help a child face his own feelings and gain some insight into the cause of his own behavior.⁹

Tolerance, like mental health itself, is not something to be achieved as the result of taking certain specified steps. It is an organismic response, involving intellectual processes, emotional behavior, and physical well-being. It is the result of conscious striving and the outcome of personal experience. Those who attempt to improve their tolerance will find that other elements of good mental health are being strengthened. For instance, when improvement in mental processes is sought through studying child development, psychology of adolescence, and educational psychology, one will, at the same time, be taking steps toward achieving better classroom procedures. As tolerance is strengthened through attention to physical health factors, one's joy in his work will be heightened and a better classroom climate will be produced.

EXAMPLES OF THE EFFECT OF TEACHERS ON PUPILS

A few studies are available which show that the personalities of teachers (including what they do as well as what they are) have pronounced effects upon pupil behavior. The following examples are designed to help prove the generalizations made in this chapter and also to suggest some steps which teachers might take to bring about the improvement of mental health.

Two Teachers and Delinquency. A juvenile officer in a West Coast city was speaking about his work to a local service club. He asserted that their city had not experienced the rise in delinquency resulting from wartime conditions which other West Coast cities of like size had reported. He indicated that there were several possible explanatory factors. Among them he mentioned a community which provided "teen-age night

⁹ Elizabeth S. Avery, "Your Classroom Climate," *National Education Association Journal*, Vol. 38 (December, 1949), p. 652. By permission of the National Education Association.

spots" under the supervision, but not the domination, of trained adults. The significance of organized athletic opportunities was stressed—it was indicated that no boy who participated in an organized athletic program had been in trouble during the past three years. The importance of working with parents was strongly emphasized, as was the role of teachers. Said the speaker, "I give most of the credit for our enviable position to two of the teachers in — High School. These teachers take time to work with individuals. They see problem behavior as an indication that pupils need help in adjustment. They investigate the pupil's problems and try to alter negative situations; when they are unable to do this they prepare the pupil, through counseling, to meet and endure the situation. They have not only the time and faculty for helping students but they have a keen insight into what we call predelinquent behavior. They are sensitive to behavior which presages difficulty."

This is quite different from the situation that evidently prevailed in a neighboring city. Two boys escaped from a state school for boys and in a 48-hour period stole two cars, held up a store, broke into another one, fatally wounded a state patrolman, and wounded a man who finally took them into custody. A newspaper gave the following account of one of the boys:

The youth said, "I just don't know what gets into me."

His home was happy, he said. He didn't steal for money. He said he wasn't that poor.

"I ran away from home three years ago and held up a place in — and then went to —. I did it because I didn't like school."

There is, of course, the possibility that the boy was what is known as a psychopathic individual—nothing could have been done for him. There is the possibility that his remark about the school was merely a way of making an excuse—a face-saving device. But there is also the distinct possibility that he could have been helped by teachers, or a teacher, who recognized "predelinquent" behavior and who regarded such behavior as an indication that the boy needed help.

The Case of Locust Point. Dr. Ruth E. Fairbank has reported the results of a functional program of mental hygiene which worked wonders in the lives of individual children.¹⁰ Locust Point, a section of Baltimore, Maryland, conducted a school survey which revealed that, out of a school population of 1,281, there were 166 children for whom predictions for the future were very black. Predictions were based on intelligence-test results and thorough investigation of community and home backgrounds. The group of 166 subnormal children was subdivided into groups.

¹⁰ Ruth E. Fairbank, "The Subnormal Child—Seventeen Years After," *Mental Hygiene*, Vol. 17 (April, 1933), pp. 177-208.

Twenty-two of the children had such pronounced disabilities that there was little likelihood they would be anything but charges to the community; for seventy-eight children it was predicted that they would drift through life at the lowest social level; and the remaining sixty-six, because of slightly higher intelligence "... offered only greater possibilities of their being detrimental to society."

A follow-up study, seventeen years later, revealed that three-fourths of the 122 (out of the original 166) who were restudied were self-supporting, in spite of the prevailing financial depression (1930-1931). Even the twenty-two with the darkest prognosis had made fair adjustment; prostitution, illegitimacy, and dependency were much lower than had been anticipated. Dr. Fairbank writes:

When three-fourths of a group of 122 subnormal individuals are found to be self-supporting, even in a period of persistent financial depression, it is evident that our earlier ideas of economic dependency among the mentally subnormal must be revised, at least to the extent of realizing that a favorable environment has its influence.¹¹

Among the stabilizing and explanatory factors in this favorable environment are mentioned: school personnel working with parents, organized athletic program, getting married, and finding a job appropriate to one's abilities. But, it is to the school ("... a modern building was eventually erected which not only serves as a schoolhouse, but acts as the social, recreational, and educational center for the entire community") and to the teachers that major credit is given for turning these inherent liabilities of Locust Point so startlingly into assets for the community. The teachers were carefully selected for their sympathetic and understanding attitude toward individual pupils. They worked with pupils not only in academic pursuits but also in matters of personal, social, and economic adjustment.

The importance of the personality of the teacher in opportunity class is well illustrated by this teacher, in whose classroom a large percentage of the very retarded children spent their school lives. She was unusually socially minded, knew the home conditions of all her pupils, was very sympathetic, and somehow or other impressed them with clear and practical ideals of decency combined with a wholesome fear of the Lord. As one girl puts it, "Miss Hannah always told me never to swear or drink or let a boy touch me, and I never did." ...

Here, again, we find the effect of contacts in those early years with teachers who were not convictionless, but aggressively determined not to lose an opportunity to inculcate good old-fashioned morality, embodying principles of decency and respect for individual personality and clean-

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 183. By permission of the publisher.

mindfulness. The most striking result of this survey is to be found in the lasting impression made on these people in childhood by one of the teachers who came in closest contact with them. Science has no tests to evaluate the influence of personality, but the tests of life on growth and development tell the story.¹²

Teachers May Cause the Symptoms. An interesting problem for speculation is postulated by Clara Bassett as she outlines the analysis of problems in three classrooms. The following data are presented:¹³

<i>Behavior problem</i>	<i>Teacher A</i>	<i>Teacher B</i>	<i>Teacher C</i>
Number of pupils	45	47	47
Dishonesty	3	12	43
Cheating	18	34	40
Disorderliness	18	1	47
Carelessness in work	17	9	45
Failure to study	26	5	44
Shyness	5	2	37
Tattling	4	22	37
Daydreaming	0	2	26
Unhappiness	0	0	17

Does teacher C cause the symptoms? Does the teacher's anticipation of the children's being problems prompt them to confirm the suspicion? Is teacher C merely more alert than the other two? Were the pupils under teacher C worse to begin with? Regardless of the answers which we give to these questions, there would still be doubt in the minds of most of us that we would willingly send a son or a daughter of our own to teacher C. If that son or daughter were a problem, we might still wish that the teacher could overlook some of the negative behaviors. Bassett gives the following interpretation:

Such wide variations in the number of problem children detected in classes of similar size and make-up must mean that either the three teachers stimulated their children to behave differently or they varied decidedly in their sensitiveness to the behavior problems of their children. A comparison of the above columns with each other indicates that one of the teachers consistently found a high percentage of problems in contrast with the other two.¹⁴

One Maladjusted Teacher Affects Scores of Pupils. The following case study, cited by Bassett, also provides food for thought. Although she

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 186 and 207. By permission of the publisher.

¹³ Clara Bassett, *The School and Mental Health*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1931, p. 50. By permission of the publisher.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 50. By permission of the publisher.

does not give statistics to prove her point, the concluding sentence expresses a conviction shared by teachers, principals, psychologists, and psychiatrists.

Miss Ray, a middle-aged teacher of first grade, burst forth in an emotional tirade when the social worker visited the class to secure information about a patient. She was flushed, excited, and denunciatory of the way in which she was being persecuted by the principal and superintendent who were "in league against her." Miss Ray had felt for years that she was being discriminated against but lately she was sure of it and she described innumerable instances which she believed substantiated her suspicions. To an experienced clinic worker it seemed fairly obvious that Miss Ray was suffering from a serious mental condition which should have received treatment years before. A few questions regarding her childhood indicated that Miss Ray was the elder of two children. Her parents had intensely wanted a boy and had resented in a childish manner Miss Ray's appearance on the scene. Later when a brother was born, Miss Ray was immediately relegated to the background and both parents concentrated their love and attention on their young son, who was felt to be a paragon of virtue in contrast to his sister. The early feeling of being unwanted and unloved, the smouldering resentment of the child against the injustice of the parents, jealousy of the brother who was given everything for which she yearned, probably laid the basis for psychological habits which have handicapped her for life. *There can be little doubt but that the emotional problems of this teacher have unconsciously affected the lives of scores of children passing through her classroom.*¹⁵

Statistical Evidence on Teacher-Pupil Relationships. It is one thing to assert that teacher personality has an effect on pupil behavior but it is another matter to prove it. There are so many factors which condition social intercourse, so many things which cause a given behavior, that it is hazardous to say *A* causes *B*. Certainly, it is the consensus of school workers that the personality of a teacher is one of the more important factors that shape the responses of pupils. One of the few studies which have made this belief definitive is that of Paul L. Boynton and associates,¹⁶ who gathered sufficient data to permit a noteworthy generalization. Their conclusion is that mentally healthy teachers have a perceptible effect on the mental health of their pupils. Seventy-three fifth- and sixth-grade teachers were studied with respect to the quality of their mental health. A similar study was made of their 1,095 pupils. It was found that those pupils who had emotionally stable and mentally healthy teachers revealed

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47. By permission of the publisher. (Italics not in original.)

¹⁶ P. L. Boynton, H. Dugger, and M. Turner, "The Emotional Stability of Teachers and Pupils," *Journal of Juvenile Research*, Vol. 18 (October, 1934), pp. 223-232.

markedly better mental health and stability than did the pupils of teachers who were in poor mental health. On all measures of instability, the children who had unstable teachers made higher scores than did those who were under the tutelage of well-balanced teachers. Moreover, these differences began to be revealed in as short a period as two to two and one-half months.

The Teacher and Emotional Weather. Daniel A. Prescott has given an extraordinarily succinct statement of the relationship of teacher personality to pupil behavior. His statement and its implications should be carefully considered by every classroom teacher.

Different people tend to create different climates of feeling among their associates; and different groupings of people show prevailing moods as different as the weather of the arctic and the torrid zones. Some groups swelter at their tasks in the heavy, humid oppressiveness of obligatory functioning, like a sea-level metropolis in midsummer. Others buoyantly undertake common responsibilities with the light, stimulating freshness of the autumn in high altitude dryness. The whole odor of life is sweet or sour, fragrant or foul, tangy or stifling, according to the moods we inhale from those around us.

It is no accident that problem children so frequently come from homes broken by divorce. Their lives have been profoundly influenced by the tensions and conflicts going on about them. It is no accident that delinquents appear so frequently in certain sections of great cities. There poverty and misery are so close to riches and ostentation that inferiority is emphasized and the prevailing mood becomes bitterness. Children are extremely sensitive to the emotional climate enveloping them. Their attitudes, their ideas about what is valuable in life, and their personal goals, as well as their moments of gaiety or depression are influenced profoundly by the moods of the people with whom they come in contact. Indeed it may safely be claimed that outlook on life, general ideals, concept of role, and emotional orientation toward society are picked up unconsciously by children from the actions and sentiments of those about them. These constitute learnings more important even than skills in reading or figuring.

The question must be raised, then, whether the emotional climate common in the school classrooms of the country is a wholesome climate or not. Is this climate a joyous, buoyant one appropriate to our usual picture of childhood as "happy"? Or is it dull, uninteresting, monotonous, and heavy? Or is it full of tensions, bickerings, repressions, and feelings of failure? Does the child unconsciously absorb the feeling of certainty that he has a significant role in the world and is a valuable person? Or does he get the sense that life is a jungle battle with no holds barred and his own lot a sorry one? Does the child feel that people are "with him" and that as part of a larger whole he and mankind are moving toward brighter days? Or is he led to feel that

other persons are essentially his antagonists, or at best the setters of unimportant and distasteful tasks? ¹⁷

The questions which Prescott raises are easy to understand; they are not so easy to face. As a matter of fact, the rest of this book is largely concerned with supplying viewpoints on some of the issues which he raises.

THE TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUPIL BEHAVIOR

[The foregoing discussion makes it evident that the classroom teacher has a serious responsibility for the shaping of the pupil's present behavior, as well as for setting the course of future development. Personality, as has been seen, is both what one is and what one does. It follows that the kind of person a teacher is, as well as the methods he uses, influences pupil actions, because children both unconsciously absorb feelings and attitudes and consciously imitate the behavior of adults with whom they have contact. This section summarizes *some* of the responsibilities which this phenomenon imposes.

Teachers Must Be Mentally Healthy. Entire books are written on the meaning of mental health and suggestions for improvement. Some of the conditions of mental health for teachers are discussed elsewhere in this volume. We shall have to be content, for the present, with an epitome of some of these factors—especially those which have the most direct effect on child behavior.

Attention should be given to physical health factors. An adequate amount of sleep, properly balanced diet, appropriate physical exercise, and allowance of time for rest and relaxation are problems which the mentally healthy teacher must solve. A task, a plan, and freedom to carry out the plan are as necessary for the teacher as for the pupil. It is important for teachers to make their philosophy of life and their education so definite that they get around to writing it out as clearly as they possibly can. Today's philosophy will not be the same as that for next month or next year, but it should be definite so that directions for growth are clearly pointed. Teachers, perhaps more than other people because of their leadership responsibilities, need to cultivate adaptable and resilient minds. A step in this direction is to have some current study project in process. This might be an in-service class, an experiment in school, or a planned reading project. An effort should be made to improve social relationships. This could be accomplished by study, such as in the reading of this book; or it can be fostered by actively engaging in social relation-

¹⁷ Daniel A. Prescott, "Emotional Weather," *The Educational Record*, Vol. 20 (January, 1939), pp. 96-97. By permission of the publisher. It is recommended that the article be read in its entirety.

ships—clubs, church activities, bridge clubs, picnics, and the company of friends at dinner. The constant contact with immature students should be balanced by planned contact with adults. Emotional satisfactions must be sought. One should take time to do those extra things which are especially enjoyable. Art, drama, motion pictures, athletic contests, creative hobbies, and music are common mediums for achieving emotional satisfactions.¹⁸

It is to be hoped that some day more attention will be given to the selection of candidates for teacher training who are mentally healthy, whose background tends to predict continuing ability to adjust. Perhaps, in the future, there will be psychological and psychiatric services freely available to teachers, so that they may receive assistance on current personal problems. In the meantime, there is much that can be done by the individual teacher to preserve and improve his own mental health. A starting point is to live a satisfying life—one in which a wide variety of interests serve to keep one's mind off the petty personal irritations of everyday living.

Teachers Need to Outgrow Their Own Childhood. The importance of the early years in the formation of adult personality is emphasized again and again by psychologists and psychiatrists. The fact must be faced that each of us is the product of his previous experiences. The statement is frequently made—and there is much truth in it—that we teach as we were taught. Yet it is also true that everyone is growing. Sometimes the growth is slow, sometimes it is taking an undesirable direction. We are convinced that education is improving, but sometimes too slowly to keep pace with the changing times. Both personality growth and improvement in educational procedures will take place more rapidly *when planning charts the course of change*. Better methods than those by which we were taught can be and will be developed. We all might well share the hope that we may be instrumental in speeding such development. But there are hazards which must be anticipated.

. . . despite chronological age, rank, position, property, prestige, power or other social status, we continue throughout life to be essentially little boys and little girls, coerced far more than we have any realization by the experiences of our long forgotten childhood. . . .

Like parents, teachers also see in their pupils the repetition of the actions that have been the source of their own personality problems and so they likewise discharge their feelings upon their pupils, inflict severe punishment for trivial actions and show by voice and manner how strongly they reject the children who so arouse their forgotten childhood. At the same time they may too favorably respond to other children who give them a feeling of

¹⁸ These and similar aspects of teacher mental health are discussed in more detail in Chapter 19, *The Teacher's Philosophy—Adult Mental Health*.

emotional security, even when those children are openly disobedient or fail to perform as well as the children they have rejected. The pupils, being at their teacher's mercy, receive the full discharge of the teacher's accumulated tensions and emotions, frustrations and resentments, just as they do at home. . . .¹⁹

Dr. Frank shows in the chapter from which the above quotation was taken that he does not believe the outgrowing of one's childhood to be an impossible accomplishment. Growth can be attained by learning to accept oneself with both one's limitations and one's assets. We can learn to understand ourselves and others. We should stop feeling guilty about our shortcomings and create a design for living that will help us to overcome them. The first step is to recognize the problem. The next is to formulate a plan—for improvement of personality and more effective teaching methods—and after that comes a need for the exercise of patience as the slow process of growth takes place.

Teachers Must Consider Individuals. The author dislikes to mention the necessity for giving attention to individual differences, because teachers hear and read about it so often that it is likely to be viewed as more of the "verbiage of pedagogy." But the fact is that recognizing individuals and giving attention to individual differences continue to be a focal point in effective education. The foregoing discussion has centered about the importance of general classroom atmosphere and the effect of a teacher upon his entire group. It is fundamental to remember that John, Mary, Alice, and Peter are live elements in the group. The teacher's smile, the voice he uses, the praise he expresses, and the work he suggests must have specific meaning and application for John, Mary, Alice, and Peter.

The touches of humor that can be used to stimulate one child are found to be completely ineffective with another. In some cases it is possible to motivate a child with mild sarcasm, while another child may be completely devastated by its use. Praise may generate further effort on the part of one child; but when it is used on another, it makes him feel so superior that he no longer sees any room for improvement in himself. Thus, it is evident that any generalized description of elements which make up a favorable classroom atmosphere is subject to error in the case of particular individuals. Teachers need to interpret these generalizations in terms of the things they know about particular pupils. Thus, while it is necessary to know the general characteristics of children of a certain age, it is also necessary to improve our knowledge about John, Mary, Alice, and Peter.

¹⁹ Lawrence K. Frank, "Adult Education and Its Significance in the Larger Program of Mental Hygiene," in Paul A. Witty and Charles E. Skinner (eds.), *Mental Hygiene in Modern Education*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1939, pp. 280 and 281. By permission of the publisher.

Ill-conceived Remarks Must Be Avoided. It should be unbelievable that any teacher could make spiteful, insulting, and pain-producing remarks to children. Yet the author has heard such remarks and has had numerous pupils come to him to report that such remarks were being made. Among the vicious words which some teachers use in reference to pupils are the following: dumb, stupid, lazy, awkward, mean, stubborn, dirty, filthy, ignorant, rude, and devilish. Such categorical evaluations are, of course, not getting at the causes of behavior, but they leave lasting impressions on the youngster, who is so eager to receive the approbation of his teacher. To the experienced observer, these words reveal a teacher who does not understand the concept of causative factors in pupil personality. Hence the teacher who uses such a term is, in fact, disclosing more about himself than about his pupils. The real impact of remarks like these, however, is that they tend to give the child the feeling of being rejected and out of place. Thus a fundamental need of the child remains unsatisfied.]

SUMMARY

There are many factors—curriculums, methods, buildings, teaching materials, community, pupils—that influence the kind of classroom atmosphere which prevails in a given situation. The most important of these is the teacher himself. “As the teacher so is the school” is a statement that must be more and more fully appreciated if schools are to grow in effectiveness.

Personality includes all that a person is, does, and will be—especially as it relates to social effectiveness. It is the personality of the teacher, more than what he knows or what methods he uses, that will determine the rate and direction of the growth of his pupils. This is true because (1) school contacts are continuous and intimate; (2) because personal contacts influence the approach to, and appreciation of, learning on the part of pupils; and (3) because the teacher becomes a goal (both consciously and unconsciously) of growth for children and adolescents.

Some of the facets of personality that will bear particular attention on the part of the teacher are manner of dress, voice, the ability to smile, emphasis on the positive, competence without dogmatism, respect for all humans, and a confidence in the worth of each individual.

Much empirical evidence and some experimental evidence points to the immediate and pronounced effect of teacher personality on pupil behavior. The influence of teachers is known to reduce delinquency and raise the level of functioning of handicapped children, on the one hand. Conversely, it has been experimentally verified that maladjusted teachers quickly stimulate an exhibition of misbehavior on the part of pupils. In short, the teacher is primarily responsible for the emotional atmosphere of the classroom.

If responsibility for influencing the behavior of school children for the better is to be properly assumed, numerous things must be done. Many will be dealt with in subsequent chapters. For the present, attention will be confined to the following considerations, which are worthy of thoughtful scrutiny: (1) The teacher himself must be in good mental health; (2) teachers must study means of outgrowing the negative influences of their own childhood; (3) individuals must be treated as unique persons—difficult as this may seem, it is the only way of improving the effectiveness of education; (4) the handicapping effect of ill-conceived remarks and categorical evaluations must be avoided.

Again let us remind ourselves that, whether we wish it or not, what the teacher influences pupil behavior at least as surely as what he says. A realization of this truth will help teachers get at the causes of many of the symptoms of behavior that are commonly manifested in the classroom.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Have you encountered, in your past school experience, a badly maladjusted teacher? If so, describe the behavior which made it evident that there was maladjustment.
2. What are some typical and commonly used classroom techniques that are questionable from the standpoint of mental health?
3. Visit some classroom in the elementary or high school for an hour or so and note any particular teacher strengths or weaknesses in terms of the data of this chapter.
4. Should a teacher ever give evidence of anger in the presence of his pupils?
5. How would you explain the difference between the view taken of pupil behavior by teachers and that taken by psychiatrists?
6. What specific steps might a teacher take to "outgrow his own childhood"?
7. Make a list of "ill-conceived" teacher remarks that you have personally heard made to you or to your classmates.
8. To what extent should paper grading, lesson planning, committee work, etc., be allowed to interfere with a teacher's regular use of recreational pursuits?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

BASSETT, CLARA, *The School and Mental Health*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1931. 66 pp.

Case studies are presented to show the causes and results of maladjusted teachers. Although the teachers are not typical, they nevertheless will remind the reader of some teachers whom they have known. The book drives home a lesson concerning the focal role of the teacher in the mental health of pupils.

BAXTER, BERNICE, *Teacher-Pupil Relationships*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941. 166 pp.

Numerous case studies and anecdotal accounts are used to present a concrete and practical discourse on the relation of pupils to their teachers. Personality characteristics of teachers are described in terms of their effect on the personalities and behavior of pupils.

LEWIN, KURT, R. LIPPITT, and R. K. WHITE, "Patterns of Aggressive Behavior in Experimentally Created 'Social Climates,'" *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 10, 1939, pp. 271-299.

A description is given of the effects on boys' behavior of planned social climates of democracy, autocracy, and *laissez faire*. The authors show clearly how the teacher's behavior produces immediate and striking differences in pupil behavior. Teachers who are interested in the "whole child" will find a challenging view.

WICKMAN, E. K., *Children's Behavior and Teachers' Attitudes*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1928. 247 pp.

A statistical study of the view that teachers take of children's conduct is presented. At the time the book was written there was much to be desired in terms of an enlightened view on the part of teachers. Many of the data are all too pertinent today.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Motivating the Class, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42nd St., New York 36. (19 min, BW, sd.)

How one teacher learned from his own mistaken efforts that it is necessary to know something of students' immediate interests if they are to engage wholeheartedly in learning activities.

Teacher As Observer and Guide, Teachers College, Columbia University, Bureau of Publications, 525 West 120th St., New York 27. (20 min, BW, sd.)

Indicates the importance of the teacher as an observer and guide of pupil growth. Problem solving, dealing with slow learners, promoting personality growth, and stimulating artistic expression are among the things shown.

This Is Robert, New York University Film Library, 26 Washington Square, New York 20. (80 min, BW, sd.)

This film would be pertinent to many chapters but, among other things, it portrays understanding and kindly teachers. It traces the development of Robert, an aggressive, "difficult," yet thoroughly appealing child, from his arrival in nursery school at the age of two, up through his first year in public school, when he is seven.

Tips for Teachers, Jam Handy Organization, 1775 Broadway, New York. (20 min, BW, sd.)

Explains the significance of the teacher's personality on effectiveness in teaching. The importance of thorough preparation and clear presentation is portrayed.

7

UNDERSTANDING AND HELPING CHILDREN WITH PROBLEMS

MENTAL HYGIENE falls into two major, but not sharply distinguished, categories—the remedial and the preventive. Remedial mental hygiene demands that something be done for school children who are having difficulties in adjustment and who give manifestations of needing help. Preventive mental hygiene emphasizes the need for so controlling conditions that maximum growth is achieved at all levels and for all pupils. It emphasizes the need for replacing the good with the better, so that everyone will come closer to realizing his full potentialities for a richer, happier, more harmonious, and more effective existence. The teacher's role in the attainment of these objectives cannot be realized unless he continuously seeks a better understanding of children—both those who are encountering problems and those who seem to be getting along satisfactorily.

Behavior is caused. This fundamental concept must be fully appreciated before even the first steps toward understanding children can be taken. Further, it must be realized that causes are of two types—antecedent and immediate. Antecedent causes have to do with background features, those which we call the contributory factors. They are the causes which build up and continue as aggravating conditions because they are not immediately apparent and hence are not soon solved. They reach out in time and space. They may go back to very early phases of the individual's life and they permeate his whole existence, both in and out of school. The immediate causes are those which are seen to precipitate an objectionable kind of behavior. They are the sparks which set off the kegs of dynamite, the leaks in the dike which cause the flood of asocial and antisocial conduct. Understanding children is more easily accomplished when both kinds of causes become a part of the picture.

Finally, by way of introduction, a distinction must be made between causes and symptoms. The causes are all important. The symptoms are only indications that something is wrong. Too many teachers, as a matter of expediency, deal only with the symptoms and totally neglect to reach

understanding by getting at the cause of the symptoms. Until symptoms are regarded as such, an understanding of children cannot be achieved.

NOT ALL PUPILS ARE PROBLEM CASES

Difficulty in Adjustment Is Normal. While it is true that all people, children quite as much as adults, have problems, it is equally true that not



What are some of the mental hygiene implications of teacher-pupil-parent conferences? How is pupil understanding improved by such practice? What other techniques are there for improving pupil understanding?

all children are problem cases. A certain amount of indecision, some tension, temporary disturbances, and even some objectionable behavior are normal. It is prolonged tension, continuing unsolved conflicts, habitual misbehavior that characterize problem cases. A boy who has a fist-fight with a classmate may be manifesting quite normal reactions to a dispute about who should be first in line. On the other hand, if a particular lad is characteristically unable to get along with his peers and has two or three fights a month, he may be manifesting symptoms of some prolonged and unsolved tension. A girl who pouts because she did not get the part she eagerly wanted in some school production may be showing

evidence of immaturity but should not be regarded as a problem case unless that attitude is a characteristic reaction. If she becomes sullen when she is not made chairman, refuses to play unless she can be "it," declines to talk at all unless she is recognized every time she raises her hand, then the multiple manifestations of undesirable behavior can be regarded as symptoms of continued difficulty.

Diagnosis Is Based on Multiple Symptoms. The study of mental hygiene sometimes makes the student so aware of symptoms that he sees in himself numerous tokens of neuroses or psychoses. This phenomenon is not uncommon among medical students, many of whom go through a stage of seeing in themselves the symptoms and later stages of any diseases they happen to be studying at the time. Normally the medical student outgrows this phase; so, too, the teacher should grow to the point of recognizing the difference between behavior that will soon pass and behavior that is symptomatic of continuing frustration. A red spot on the chest is not a sure sign of measles. Other symptoms must develop before the doctor can make a definite diagnosis. The teacher should not make a diagnosis of either himself or his pupils from one symptom.

The study of mental hygiene in the classroom would indeed be abortive if all pupils were seen as cases of maladjustment. It would be a miscarriage of learning if teachers were to become so acutely aware of mental ill-health that they would interpret isolated symptoms as having a significance that would rightly be given only to a whole set of factors indicating a serious condition. Objectivity in viewing pupils calls for a recognition of the positive aspects of behavior as well as a recognition of significant symptoms.

A Working Concept of Normality Is Basic to Understanding Children. The difficult problem of working for mental health in the classroom is made all the harder by a failure to understand typical behavior. This kind of understanding is a major objective of such basic courses in teacher education as educational psychology and teaching methods. Individual differences and their educational implications are stressed. That growth is slow, that it progresses on uneven fronts, that the child carries on experiments in adjustment, that errors are caused by lack of experience, and that the correct terminology is a "child with problems," rather than a "problem child"—these are facts that are emphasized with the aim of fostering better understanding.

There seems to be a tendency to confuse what is normal and what is desirable. For instance, it is normal for children to encounter some learning difficulties in all the grades. Obviously, not all children can be as good as the leaders in the class in reading, writing, and arithmetic. It is normal for children to quit school as soon as they are allowed by law to do so. Even today, 60 per cent of our population over twenty-five years

of age has an eighth-grade education or one lower still.¹ The average high-school pupil will fail from one to four subjects during his secondary-school career. The average boy or girl will not be a doctor, a lawyer, or a teacher. Average individuals will, however, be parents, will cast their votes at elections, and will determine the rate of progress of civilization. Unless we remember that it is the superior individual who becomes the professional worker, clarifies the issues at elections, and formulates the policies of a nation, we are likely to expect too much of the normal (average) pupil and thereby place him under strain. This is not a pessimistic view. It is merely realistic. When teachers truly understand what normality in conduct and achievement is they will be well on the way to helping all children to realize more fully their own potentialities.

If the reader is inclined to discredit this statement of the case, let him take stock of his average pupils' learning problems, of the difficulty of putting across straight subject matter, of the average accomplishment of pupils in any grade, and of the average educational attainment of citizens in general. Hence, typical children should not be regarded as "problem children." But until teachers have achieved a working concept of normality in growth, behavior, and intelligence, there is likely to be less than a desirable amount of understanding.

Furthermore, our concept of normality should include the knowledge that there is no one child who will exactly fit the "hypothetical average." Each child is unique and knowledge gathered from a textbook must be buttressed by information which leads to an appreciation of the individual. Such an understanding is not only basic to fostering mental health in school but it is a fundamental of effective education. We, as teachers, might well accept the advice of Harry Emerson Fosdick, relative to belief in democracy, and apply it to our work in mental hygiene.

Primarily, democracy is the conviction that there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people, and that if we throw wide the doors of opportunity so that all boys and girls can bring out the best that is in them, we shall get amazing results from unlikely sources. That is why, with all its discouraging blunders, we must everlastingly believe in it.²

HELP CHILDREN BY LISTENING

Listening Builds Rapport. A simple but effective technique for helping children is to listen attentively to them. There are several reasons why merely listening is helpful. For one thing it gives the individual a sense of

¹ *Education—An Investment in People*, Committee on Education, 1945-1946, United States Chamber of Commerce, p. 6.

² Quoted from Harry Emerson Fosdick in *National Education Association Journal*, Vol. 38 (November, 1949), p. 580. By permission of the National Education Association.

significance, or even of importance, to have another listen to him. Most of us have at times felt almost insulted upon realizing that someone with whom (or rather, to whom) we were talking was not paying the slightest attention. Many a young woman is aware that one way to make an impression on a young man is to give undivided attention to him; instead of letting her eyes wander to other people, she keeps her gaze on him and seems to "hang on his every word." Teachers can, and effective teachers do, pay attention to what their pupils are saying. This simple act helps the speaker to gain confidence by giving him a sense of importance, and it encourages him to express his problem completely and clearly.

Listening Provides Catharsis. An attentive listener gives the confider an opportunity to make use of the principle of catharsis. Sigmund Freud, the great psychoanalyst and medical doctor, has made it clear that getting a thing off one's chest is a potent method of dealing with frustration. People who are deeply disturbed emotionally may need the help of drugs or hypnosis to get the full benefit of catharsis; but for ordinary tensions, talking to someone in whom the confider has confidence may afford a healthy catharsis for pent-up emotions. Thus, even without giving any wise advice, the teacher may help pupils by giving them an opportunity to release their feelings through the avenue of free talking.

The experience of a high-school teacher illustrates the effect that listening to a student can have upon the student. A senior dropped into the teacher's room after school hours and said that she was experiencing some difficulties for which she hoped the teacher could suggest help. The teacher immediately became serious and said, "I hope I can. What is the difficulty?" The girl then proceeded to tell her about all the troubles she was having. The English teacher seemed to have little patience with her inability to use grammar and punctuation marks correctly. Her boy friend was paying more attention to another girl than he was giving to her. She had hoped to get a certain part in a forthcoming dramatic production but the role had gone to another.

As the details were poured out, the teacher began to formulate some words of advice, but every time she was ready to say something, the girl burst forth with more of her sad story. Her parents were not so lenient about letting her go out on dates as were the parents of the other high-school girls. The teacher had in mind to say that perhaps this was because they wanted to be sure that their daughter would not encounter any unwholesome influences and that, therefore, it was an indication of the parents' love. She did not have a chance. Still more woes were bared by the suffering student. Other girls had more attractive sweaters than she had—in fact, they had two or three while she had only one. She was not sure that she had decided on the right course of study.

Suddenly the girl arose and said, "Well, thank you, Miss —, you have helped me a great deal," and she went out of the room, leaving the teacher with her mouth ready to give good advice but with no opportunity to do so. The teacher later admitted that she was not only surprised but disappointed at not being able to help. However, a day or two later, the girl stopped her in the hall and said, "Miss —, I want to thank you again for helping me so much, the other evening." There was no time to analyze the situation because the teacher was due in her classroom. But that evening the girl stopped by and reiterated her thanks and said, "You have no idea how much you have helped me. Many of my problems seem much less serious now." "Then," concluded the teacher, "I realized what had happened. I had heard of the principle of catharsis but had not remembered it at the time. Inadvertently, I had simply listened, not because I had nothing to say, but because I had no chance to speak. She had got rid of some of her tension through talking with me. Without giving any advice, I had helped her accidentally by lending an attentive ear."

The girl had been helped in two ways. She had rid herself of several tensions by talking about her problems. And, it seems probable, that she had straightened out some of her thinking through the process of describing her problems to another. That is, putting one's problems into words makes them take on a more definite shape than they had while they remained vague worries. Very often describing one's feelings to another makes it a little easier to see the absurdity of some of the original points of view.

Listening Provides Insight. Another advantage of listening is that teachers are enabled to find out how the child feels about his situation. It may be that the pupil has what seems to be a very good home. The visiting teacher would give a report commending the home conditions. Yet the pupil may feel that he is being treated unfairly, he may suffer from unfounded jealousies toward a sibling, he may think that what the teacher would deem a well-ordered home is characterized by a domineering atmosphere. What the pupil feels is, from the standpoint of helping him with his problems, as important—perhaps more so—as the actual, objective situation. What these feelings are can be discovered in different ways but one of them is by listening. It is truly said that "To know is to understand" and one way to learn is to listen.

The writer is not adverse to giving advice, but sound advice must be based, at least partially, upon how the person feels. The description of these feelings will not always come out so easily as in the case of the girl cited above. Many are loath to bare their feelings, many young children lack the facility with language to do so easily. It is therefore important that the act of listening be cultivated to the extent of its becoming a habit. This listening habit facilitates the establishment of rapport between

the pupil and the teacher and makes it easier for the pupil to tell his story. When the young person can depend upon the teacher to listen to his faltering explanation, and when he knows that he will not be deluged with adult advice, he will be encouraged to recite the facts that will make possible a better understanding of his problems.

UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN THROUGH PARENT CONTACTS

Working with Parents. It is true, as is often asserted, that children differ widely one from another; and the same holds true for parents. There are some who are consistently good influences on the balanced growth of children; there are others who are such poor influences that their right to retain their children is justifiably questioned. The differences that exist among parents make it difficult to formulate any sweeping generalizations regarding the relationships of teachers and parents. The more information the teacher has about the relationships between parents and their children, the greater is the likelihood that some pertinent approach to problems may be worked out.

There are three considerations that may advantageously be taken into account when dealing with parents. One is that parents, by and large, have good intentions in dealing with their children. Most of them are seriously trying to do the best they can for and with their offspring. The author's discussion of teacher-parent problems, however, leads to the conclusion that frequently teachers are not sufficiently aware of the good intentions of parents. Perhaps this is because teachers, having a background in the psychology of childhood or adolescence, having studied mental hygiene, and being able to look at children more objectively, can plainly see the mistakes that are being made by parents and so neglect to evaluate the good intentions of the latter. Teachers are quick to realize this tendency, so a word of warning will suffice; but the precaution is warranted, because a much more advantageous starting point is established when there are feelings of mutual confidence between teachers and parents.

A second consideration is that frank honesty can be used with parents. Most of them are seeking information that will conduce to better growth in their children and are willing to accept advice when it is graciously given. Tact, of course, is desirable but, where tact fails, the author has found that brutal honesty and the statement, "You are wrong," does not always arouse resentment. Teachers who have tried the technique of forthright comment report that it is, more frequently than not, effective even though they dislike having to use it. Obviously, the frankness should be bolstered with as much factual information and sound theory as is possible. Where there is a question as to how far one can go in advising parents, the final criterion should be the welfare of the child concerned.

The third consideration is that parents are, like their children, products of the experiences they have had. When parents err, it is probable that they are either imitating, or rebelling against, some influence that operated in their own childhood. Many of the techniques they use on their children have been directly copied from those of their parents, whom they probably *now* believe to have done a good job. Teachers who recognize the pervasiveness of this phenomenon have not only a clue to the better understanding of themselves, but also a clue to understanding parents. If they are able to make clear to parents this general tendency, they will aid them to exert a more salutary influence on their children.

As may be inferred from the above, there is not necessarily a close correlation between effective parenthood and educational or economic status. Homes which operate at a subsistence level frequently provide as wholesome an emotional atmosphere as do middle-class and well-to-do homes. Genuine affection counterbalances material lacks. Consistency, with even questionable methods, may be better than sporadic use of superior methods. Acceptance of children for what they are, rather than what parents might wish them to be, is just as likely to occur in a home of poor economic circumstances as in the home where there is ample means for comfortable living. The case is similar with regard to education. It is possible to have had formal education through the college and university level without getting any specific instruction in the nature and needs of children or without taking courses dealing with family relations. Even when such specific study has been made, the application of the knowledge may fall short because of the limitations placed on the individual through conditioning circumstances in his early childhood. On the other hand, someone who has had no extensive formal education may be fortunate enough to have enjoyed wholesome mental hygiene influences because of the stability of his own parents and may unconsciously apply those influences in carrying out his own parental responsibilities.

Negative Home Influences. In many instances, teachers cannot do anything about negative home influences. Sometimes, however, it is possible to help parents see themselves somewhat more objectively if the teacher possesses some insight into common parental errors. Some of these errors have a very direct effect on the way a child behaves in the school. Indeed, there are some points at which the philosophy of the school is in direct opposition to the philosophy of the home. The teacher then has the responsibility of pointing out the conflict and trying to justify the viewpoint of the school.

A teacher made a study of some of these points of conflict by having fellow teachers indicate the one or two pupils in their respective classes who were judged to be having the greatest difficulty in adjustment. She then visited the home of each of these children and found, through ques-

tioning, the following points of conflict: (1) The school taught a co-operative and intellectual approach to the solution of difficulties, while the home preached the doctrine of "Don't take anything off anybody." (2) The school attempted to get each child to compete with himself, but parents were more interested in the child's being at the head of the class—or at least standing well in comparison to the neighbor's child. (3) The school attempted to teach good health habits and the ideal of truthfulness, whereas the parents, perhaps unwittingly, preached to the child that other people's concern about his diet or tooth-brushing habits was none of their business; or that the child was six years old for purposes of going to school but only five when he rode on the bus. (4) The school tried to diminish the prestige of fighting, but the father was likely to say, "If you get licked at school, I'll lick you again when you come home." In addition, the investigator found that, in several of the homes from which children with adjustment problems came, the parents originally had a rather pugnacious attitude toward the school. Nevertheless, the teacher was able to make clear to the families the differences in viewpoint and to stimulate acceptance of the educational viewpoint.³ It required both honesty and tact to accomplish this result.

Another negative home influence—one which has been frequently noted by authorities on mental hygiene—is the tendency of parents to compensate through their children. Parents push their children toward superior academic accomplishment or urge them to hold several class offices or to be prominent in athletic events. This pushing generates in the children tensions that prevent their accomplishing what they might if they were left alone. One girl in the fifth grade who had superior intellectual equipment was below grade in her reading. Diagnostic tests revealed no specific difficulty. A conference with her parents revealed that they were concerned about the girl's lack of superior attainment in reading and were coaching her at home. It was admitted that not all the reading sessions were conducted calmly and happily, but that, in fact, they frequently ended with the girl in tears and the parents in an angry mood. The teacher encouraged the parents to give up tutoring the girl and to let her drift for a while. As often happens in such cases, it was only a matter of months before the girl was slightly above grade in her reading accomplishment. The most interesting phenomenon in this instance was, however, that the mother admitted she had never been a good reader and that she did not want her daughter to suffer from the same handicap. (A father sometimes will push his sons into athletic competition and encourage them to aim at stardom because in school he himself had failed to gain the glamour of being foremost in athletics.)

³ Margaret E. Onion, unpublished master's study, Eugene, Ore.: University of Oregon, 1946.

Parents who have acquired attitudes of inferiority frequently plan great achievements for their children in the field in which they have experienced thwarted ambitions. The case of Paul J. illustrates this tendency. Paul's father was a successful pharmacist who had worked his way to achievement without much formal education. His lifelong desire had been to be a physician, but he had been unable to realize this aim. From early childhood it has been decreed that Paul should enter the medical profession. After completing his college courses with considerable difficulty, Paul secured entrance to a medical school, but in the first semester failed in anatomy and chemistry. Investigation showed that his scholastic aptitude was in the lowest five per cent of his class and that his interests, measured by relatively objective techniques, were not at all those of physicians. Both tests and interviews showed the young man's interests and abilities to be in the business field rather than in medicine. Since he had been released from the medical school by his failures this profession was closed to him, which was probably best for his ultimate welfare. This adjustment was achieved, however, at the expense of years of lost effort that resulted in creating in Paul a sense of personal inadequacy that will be difficult to overcome in any field of endeavor. Many failing students in all colleges have been driven to seek a higher education for which they are unadapted because their parents seek compensation in the attainment of superior educational and economic status by their children. . . . In some cases, of course, the drive of parental compensation may be a valuable one in spurring the child to achievement. . . .⁴

An error made particularly by conscientious parents is that they are unable to let their children grow up. Teachers frequently report that some mothers daily bring their youngsters to school or meet them after school in order to see them safely home. Many children who enter the first grade are not able to tie their shoes or to put on their rubbers, because these things have always been done for them by their loving mothers. This phenomenon is not limited to the primary school. The same factor is accountable when the teen-age girl is not allowed to have dates and when the high-school boy is not allowed to go on an overnight hike with his classmates. Last summer the author came upon such a dilemma in the case of a college freshman who had the ability to do acceptable college work, but his background of a mediocre high-school record, plus a hovering mother, seemed to prevent his doing passing work. His former high-school principal reported that the mother had often consulted him about ways and means of the boy's getting better results. She was always initiating new plans to help her son. When he entered college, the mother had flown several hundred miles on three different occasions during one semester to see if she could not do something for

⁴ Laurance F. Shaffer, *The Psychology of Adjustment*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936, pp. 159-160. By permission of the publisher.

him. In spite of all assistance, he failed in most of his courses. He was transferred to the school where the author was teaching and, as on previous occasions, the mother made the original contact. After talking to the boy and gathering the data given above, the author suggested that the mother withdraw and let the boy take the initiative and the responsibility, himself. Her answer was disheartening, "I'll talk to him and see if he'll do it." The boy decided that he would like to try to enter a college in a remote corner of the state, but the mother was afraid that she would not be able to oversee his schedule and to attend to his studying when he should. As a matter of parenthetical interest, the boy was driving a current model of a Cadillac convertible. It may not have been too late for the youth, but it was too late for the mother. No satisfactory solution of the problem was found.

Other errors made by parents that show direct results in the behavior of the child at school are overacceptance, rejection, excessive dominance or submission, lack of consistency in dealing with their children, and lack of objectivity in viewing the gifts and liabilities of their own children. A teacher should not be misled into thinking that she can diagnose home conditions from seeing behavior manifestations in children at school. For instance, an aggressive, bullying, dogmatically self-assertive child may have developed these characteristics from being overaccepted, cuddled, coddled, and pampered at home. Another child having the same behavior trends may be compensating for being rejected, ignored, and being made to toe the mark rigidly at home.

These negative home influences are mentioned because a teacher has three specific uses for information about them. One is that he can better understand the child if he has knowledge concerning the factors operative in the shaping of his personality. In the second place, he may be frequently called upon by parents for counsel and assistance in dealing with child-raising problems that are tragically real, even though vaguely formulated. A third way in which the information may be useful is that an understanding of the factors operative in the child's home background may afford clues to his treatment in the school.

Salutary Home Influences. Just as the teacher may take advantage of the knowledge of negative home influences, he may make use of his knowledge of the salutary influences in the home by more clearly formulating objectives. One of the greatest assets of the home is the affection which children may enjoy there. When a child is loved for what he is, he is getting more than physical gratification. He is developing a confidence that he is significant and worthy. He is developing confidence from a feeling that he can trust a friendly world. If, on the other hand, he is without this affection, he is likely to develop hostile and pessimistic views of the nature of the social world. Current articles and

books dealing with the mental health and personality development of children stress the factor of affection as of prime importance. The role of affection in well-being is illustrated in studies of children who are being raised in institutions. In one such study doctors found that children had better appetites, slept more soundly, played better with their house-mates, gained in weight more rapidly, and seemed to be more alert to things about them after the doctors ordered the nurses to spend an hour a day cuddling, fondling, and talking to each child.

Stability of environment is another asset to development that can only be weakly compensated for in the school. There is a planned and progressive change in the experiences which the child has in the school. Both subjects for study and teachers who lead him are changed at least once a year (one- and two-teacher schools excepted) and sometimes more often. The home, on the other hand, remains much the same year after year. Even though the place of residence is changed—and this sometimes constitutes a hazard in the development of a stable personality—the parents remain much the same, year after year, as does the type of home in which the child lives. During World War II, studies revealed that children suffered most from being evacuated from their customary places of residence. The change of dwelling place had the most pronounced negative effect if the parents were unable to accompany the child when changes were made. There were those who believed that it was better to keep the child in his home and with his parents, even though that meant greater exposure to physical danger.

The home can make a unique contribution to the wholesome development of the child by providing him with possessions—things which are undeniably his own. Having books, toys, clothes, tools, and furniture which are his, and his alone, gives the child and the young adult a feeling of importance and significance that is fundamental to the building of confidence. A room of his or her own is something that should be seriously considered by the parents of an adolescent. The room in which parents may work only with the permission of the young person helps to provide a sense of privacy and personal security. It is a mistaken notion that youngsters should be taught to share everything they have. A co-operative attitude is more likely to be engendered if there are some things which are used in common by all members of the family and other things which belong definitely to the individuals in the family. Respect for the property of others is stimulated by a person's having things which are unquestionably his own. Much of the disrespect for the property rights of others that is manifest in children's stealing has been traced to the circumstance that these children do not have things which others may use only upon permission. The questions, "May I use your bicycle?", "Will you lend me your dictionary?", and "Will you let me use your sewing

kit?" are some which should be heard frequently even in the house where there is but one child, and still more often when there are two or more children.

Alternatives to Working with Parents. It is realized that the above information is of limited usefulness to the teacher. He may be able to use some of the ideas in talking and counseling with parents. Their most pertinent value, however, is that they help him realize some of the home influences which shape the conduct of pupils in the classroom. Even the courageous teacher who is willing to attempt a reconstruction of the mistaken ideas of parents finds that sometimes the advice is ignored or even resented. Sometimes parental habits are so firmly established that change is improbable, if not impossible.

These experiences lead to the often heard question, "What can you do about it when your efforts to change parental attitudes fail?" The answer may seem like an evasion of the question: Try to provide, in your contacts with the pupil in the school, some of the lacks from which he suffers in the home. According to the teacher's code of ethics, teachers must avoid undermining the child's respect for the authority and prestige of his parents, so without criticizing the methods or philosophy of the home, a teacher must try to convince the pupil, through verbal instruction and example, of the relative superiority of the philosophy of the school. Thus, for example, there might be some study of the merits of individual initiative versus competition, of cooperation versus fighting, and of cooperation versus the "chip-on-the-shoulder" attitude. Duties and responsibilities can be assigned in the classroom which would tend to offset the barriers to growing up that the overanxious parent imposes. If the child demands too much attention as the result of being overaccepted at home, ignoring him or "putting him in his place" will merely be giving him a lesson that he may later have to learn under more trying circumstances. When shyness indicates, and investigation of home factors confirms, that the child is rejected at home, the obvious role of the teachers is to supply some of the affection and acceptance that have been denied.

School Influences Can Compensate for Home Deficiencies. Children can be helped in solving home difficulties, even though no actual contact with the home is made. The teacher and the school activities can afford compensations which make it easier for the child to absorb his difficulties. This does not imply that opportunities for parent-teacher contacts should be ignored; but it suggests that constructive steps can be taken when such contacts are difficult or impossible to establish.

While the parent or parent-substitute often is an aggravating factor in the case of a maladjusted child, and while therapy might move ahead faster if the adults were also receiving therapy or counseling, *it is not necessary for the adults to be helped in order to insure successful play-therapy results.*

The reader will notice that many of the reports in this book are of chil-

dren who were in situations where there was little insight on the part of the adults toward a better way of helping these problem children. In very few of the cases did the adults receive treatment of any kind, and yet the children were able to become strong enough within themselves to withstand very trying conditions. It seems as though the insight and self-understanding gained by these children brought about more adequate ways of coping with their situations, and, since the tensions eased, this in turn brought about a certain change in adults.⁵

This quotation is pertinent, even though it is referring to play therapy. There are many ways of supplying the child with compensating satisfactions. There are many ways to give him freedom. There are many ways in which he may make contributions to the smooth functioning of a classroom. The significant thing is for us to realize that just as there are many contributing factors in the inception of a problem, so too there are many avenues which may be taken as a solution to a problem.

Classroom teachers can provide affection. A little third-grade girl was observed one day who was making no contribution to class discussion. She did not talk with her neighbors. Even during recess she remained quietly in her chair. There was some written work to be handed in which a few students submitted early and then, in a surge, the remaining pupils brought their work to the desk. The girl joined the throng and reached out to put her paper on the desk; but the teacher also reached out and put her arm about the girl's waist, at the same time continuing her conversation with another pupil. When she finished, she turned to the little girl and pulled her closer, remarking, "That's a very neat bit of work you have done." At first the girl pulled away, but in a moment she bent her head to one side and laid it against the teacher's shoulder. Without knowing anything about home conditions, one was aware that the girl needed just such spontaneous expression of affection. It need not be assumed that affection must be shown in a physical caress. Merely paying a child individual attention by commenting on his work, praising some contribution, and above all giving a friendly smile will make him aware of an attitude of affection.

Teachers can help make up the deficit of not having property. Materials can be assigned to individuals, it can be understood that books are temporarily the property of a particular individual, a child's assigned place at a table or a desk can be understood to be his own. Group pride in the classroom can be fostered by encouraging pupils to attend to its decoration and neatness.

Stability of environment, in the sense of meeting few strange people, cannot be arranged for in ordinary class routines; but there can be a

⁵ Virginia Mae Axline, *Play Therapy*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1947, p. 68. By permission of the publisher.

sensitiveness to the child's problems. A word of comment from a teacher who knows a pupil to the new teacher to whom the child is going, and a comment to already oriented students as to the desirability of meeting the new student with a warm friendliness will contribute to the feeling of being accepted.

(By way of summary, the teacher can help students who suffer emotional deprivation or frustration in the home by providing an antidote. Knowing the conditions that tend to stimulate evidences of maladjustment will help to disclose what contrasting stimulation should be provided. Often it is impossible to do anything about the home situation (that may be the responsibility of some social agency), but it is possible so to treat the child that the school environment in some way compensates for the deficiencies of the home. Admittedly, this is only a palliative, but palliatives can help one endure pain while he is making the growth which will enable him to overcome or overlook the primary deficiency.)

UNDERSTANDING PUPILS THROUGH PEER EVALUATION

The Place of Peer Evaluation in Understanding Pupils. One of the more pervasive problems of mental hygiene and an outstanding objective of education is that of social adjustment. The National Association of Secondary-School Principals has asserted one of the imperative needs of youth is that "All youth need to develop respect for other persons, to grow in their insight into ethical values and principles, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others."⁶ If this be true, and few would have the temerity to question it, then a knowledge of what one's peers think of him is basic to the understanding of a given pupil. Peer relationships are of importance not only in terms of immediate adjustment but also in terms of the practice they afford for later mature and productive citizenship. The teacher cannot be satisfied with his own evaluation of peer adjustments, simply because adult values and adult views of behavior differ from those of younger people.

It seems evident that if we wish to know a pupil well, we cannot rely solely on our own subjective impressions or even our objective observations. Our best objective data cannot be the same, or our evaluations as important, as those which the group makes of the pupil. We must somehow come to see each pupil through the eyes of the group as a whole. We must set up ways of getting this group judgment.⁷

⁶ *Planning for American Youth*, Washington, D.C.: National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 1944, p. 43. Permission to reprint granted by the National Association of Secondary-School Principals.

⁷ Ruth Cunningham, George H. Henry, and Madeline Roberts, "But There Is No Average Pupil," *National Education Association Journal*, Vol. 38 (November, 1949), p. 581. By permission of The National Education Association.

Techniques for Obtaining Peer Evaluations. It was indicated earlier in the chapter that valuable insights into the feelings of individual youngsters can be gained by developing the habit of listening. A view of the evaluations placed on their classmates can be achieved by this same technique of directed, or purposeful, listening. The remarks which are made in the presence of the individual, as well as those which are made "behind his back," are informative. The tone of voice in which others address the person being studied, the nicknames which are applied to him, and the nature of the questions which are directed his way are all clues to the evaluations others place on him. What is heard must be interpreted. It cannot be accepted solely in terms of what is said. Questions such as the following will help orient directed listening: What are the motivations of the individual who made the remark? Under what circumstances was the remark made? Is there a repetitive nature, or constant theme, revealed? Do the comments seem to represent a consensus of many students? Do the observations, in the teacher's opinion, seem to be justified?

Estimates of evaluation by one's peers may also be acquired from directed observation. The frequency with which a student is elected to office, the number of times he is appointed chairman of a group, the role of leadership (or the kind of follower he is) apart from formal elections, and the kind of response typically made to his suggestions all provide clues to an understanding of pupil evaluation of others. Observations may also be made of the person-to-person relationships which exist. Which individuals "pair off"? What kind of persons spontaneously seek the company of the individual being observed? Is he on the fringe of the spontaneous groups or is he an integral part of them? What kinds of information do others seek when they question him? These questions and others of a similar nature will provide further insights into peer evaluations.

Adjustment inventories, used with due caution and as suggestive of clues—taking individual items on the questionnaire as the starting point for interviews—can assist teachers in evaluating peer adjustment. It is important to go back of single items, such as the pupil's never seeking the advice of classmates or his preference for working alone, and to analyze the reasons why the response is given. Inventories may be used for obtaining an early clue to the matter of peer adjustment, before there is an opportunity to listen, observe, or use a sociogram, and thus difficulties may be anticipated. An early start on any problem of adjustment may very well be the means by which later and more difficult problems may be avoided.

UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN THROUGH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

College Courses. A number of professional courses are offered, in typical teacher-education institutions, which pave the way to a better understanding of children. Representative courses conducive to such understanding may include Educational Psychology, Mental Hygiene, Psychology of Childhood, Psychology of Adolescence, The Education of Exceptional Children, Pupil Guidance, Student Counseling, Measurement in Education, and Curriculum Development. Each course of this kind carries a particular emphasis which broadens the teacher's view of the many-faceted problem of personality development.

There are two shortcomings in college courses as an avenue for understanding children. One of these is the fact that too often the verbal descriptions fall short of giving a clear conception of the unique, living individual. The generalizations and stress on typical situations fail to answer the difficult question, "What shall be done for individuals?" This shortcoming is intensified by the fact that the courses are offered before the student has had the enlightening experience of working with children. It sometimes happens that for some reason an experienced teacher repeats a course he has had as an undergraduate. He may then exclaim, "My, there are so many helpful suggestions in this course. I cannot see how I previously overlooked these things." Two things can be done to offset this disadvantage. One is to supplement, at every opportunity, one's academic study with observation of children—talk with them, play with them, watch them. The other thing that may be done is to keep one's old texts so as to review them with specific problems in mind after accepting a teaching position.

The second shortcoming is due to the extreme youth of the science of psychology. Whereas medicine, physics, chemistry, and mathematics have histories which stretch back through centuries, psychology, as a science, is only slightly more than half a century old. Certainly, all the data are not completely assembled. One is amazed to find the startling contrasts which exist between a book on child psychology written in 1915 and one written in 1950. The change and, we hope, progress are remarkable, but it must be admitted that there are still many unanswered questions. This situation makes it imperative that teachers devote at least a part of their time to studying contemporary developments. Fortunately, the many excellent professional magazines make it possible for teachers to compensate for the deficiencies of their college courses.

Despite these two shortcomings, college courses dealing with the nature and course of human development are a vital part of the background of successful teachers. There are many insights to behavior (understanding

the nature and extent of individuals, techniques for motivation, appreciation of the role of emotion in learning, knowledge of what normal phases of conduct are, and the like) which the teacher must have if he is to be successful in either academic teaching or the fostering of mental health. Increasingly, it is being realized that knowledge of subject matter is not enough—secondary education included—to fit the teacher for the intricate role of providing optimum situations for wholesome pupil growth.

In-service Training. In-service training is even more pertinent to an understanding of pupils than are college courses, because those who participate are currently having direct and individual experience with youngsters. What is being learned from leaders and the discussion which takes place in the study group can be weighed against immediate personal experience. There are several forms which in-service training may take. Where highly trained specialists are available in metropolitan centers, these specialists organize study groups and give teachers information relative to their particular aims and techniques for accomplishing their purposes. This would appear to be almost an obligation, since in many instances teachers have to help execute these same techniques. Even where the specialists work directly with pupils (for instance, in a reading clinic), it is necessary for the teacher to work with the pupil in other phases of schoolwork, and he should know what is going on so that they will not be working at cross purposes.

Many universities make off-campus classes available to groups of teachers, either within a town or for adjacent towns. An expert from the university outlines the work, lectures, suggests pertinent readings, and sometimes makes a professional library available. Evening classes on the campus are widely offered to teachers within commuting distance. Such in-service training is made additionally attractive because credit is often given, counting toward degrees or special certificates. The author has participated in many such classes and found that there is a marked contrast in the understanding and interest of teachers-on-the-job and teachers-in-preparation. The former demand that instruction be specific and practical, whereas the latter are satisfied with verbalized generalities.

Teachers in isolated areas may not have such opportunities for in-service training. A substitute is available in the form of correspondence courses. Here, again, owing to the fact that the teacher is daily working with pupils, the courses come alive because they can more readily be related to current experiences. Correspondence courses possess the double advantage of being (1) financially economical, and (2) requiring that the teacher do the work and hence the learning.

Another form of in-service training is that of workshops. These are often held during vacation periods (e.g., just prior to the opening of

school), or school may be suspended for the few days devoted to the workshop. Teachers and specialists engage in study groups, the teachers being expected to give, as well as to receive. Often an experimental, or demonstration, situation is provided that adds meaning to the project. A sample program of a workshop in which all the teachers in a county participated for several days and which centered around the general topic, Improving the Mental Hygiene Values of a School, included the following subtopics:

Reciprocal Relations between Reading and Mental Health

The Teacher's Influence on Classroom Atmosphere

Mental Ill-health Symptoms in the Classroom

Improvement of Social (Peer) Adjustment

The Teacher's Personal Mental Health

Working with the Home for Better Mental Health

Physical Health and Mental Health

Using Sociograms and Adjustment Inventories

Play Therapy, Art Therapy, and Creative Writing

How Emotions Affect the Learning Process

How Teachers Can Aid Each Other in Solving Problems

The Unit Approach and Child Development

Discipline and Mental Health

Community Resources for Mental Health

The teachers chose topics that were of interest to them and worked out answers to questions which were appropriate to the topic, under the guidance of clinical psychologists, college professors, and psychiatrists—each of whom directed one of the groups. Besides the practical suggestion for solving school problems, the teachers had the opportunity of obtaining the inspiration of professional fellowship. Administrators, as well as teachers, reported that the information gained had aided the understanding of children to such a degree that both the effectiveness and the enjoyment of work were enhanced.

Personal Experimentation. One source of information leading to better understanding of children that is available to every teacher, whether he is in a one-teacher school or a large metropolitan system, is that of personal experiment. He can, for instance, experiment with free play, art work, creative writing, the use of personality inventories, in an attempt to achieve more complete understanding of his pupils. He can experiment with the making of a case study, with a view to diagnosis and remediation as the outcome. Teachers will find it stimulating to take such books as Virginia Mae Axline's *Play Therapy*, Carl R. Rogers's *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, Edmund Bullis's *Human Relations in the Classroom*, and Julia Weber's *My Country School Diary*, and to apply some of the techniques described to the study of his own pupils. Such

experiments will always be informative and have the probability of making it possible to do something highly constructive for some pupils.

Experimentation will be additionally informative and stimulating if it is a group project. Two or more teachers *can*, without the expert aid of the "learned college professor," apply some analytic and therapeutic devices, discuss the results each obtains, and achieve many constructive viewpoints. One such fruitful group experiment is to gather the information on a child with problems that goes into a typical case study, and then to sit down as a committee and discuss a program for remediation.

Understanding children through personal and group experimentation and study should, of course, be supplemented with the reading of professional literature. Maximum results will be obtained from such reading if it is planned and organized. Attention should be concentrated on a particular problem or subject, so that various views will be gained. No criticism of random reading is hereby implied, but it should be remembered that purposes—goals—are significant aspects of efficiency and of mental hygiene.

SUMMARY

(A school program which is designed to produce optimum mental health conditions for children must be based upon understanding. It is necessary to bear in mind, at all times, that behavior is caused, and that obvious behavior is likely to be a symptom of difficulty. It is not the obvious conduct but the causes of behavior that must be understood if help is to be provided to school children.

All children encounter some difficulty; they portray some symptoms of maladjustment. Imperfect adjustment is normal, and teachers must be fully aware of the fact that not all children are problems—they all need help and understanding, but they should not be regarded as cases. The repeated manifestation of difficulties and the multiplication of symptoms are what indicate abnormality.

One of the easiest ways to understand children is by lending an attentive ear—by listening to them. Teachers must remember that the whole child (emotional, physical, and intellectual factors are to be counted) must be considered, so it is necessary to learn about him from the home as well as from school data. Only by understanding the home can we begin to get at the causes of the symptoms that are disturbing to the teacher and to the child's classmates. At times, teachers will find it advantageous to work with the home; but if this is impractical, there is still much that can be done in school to offset negative home influences. The child can be given emotional release through engaging in interesting activities, he can be led into activities from which he can gain a sense of accomplishment, and he can be accepted by the teacher so that his sense of social security will be at least partially improved.

Many data helpful for understanding children can be taken from school records. Such information would include standardized test data, record of past scholastic experience, anecdotal reports of typical phases of behavior, and the evaluations formulated by previous teachers.

The teacher's understanding cannot be complete without including a view of the child as he appears in the eyes of his peers. Techniques for gaining this insight are: listening to the interpersonal remarks of pupils in the class, observation specifically directed to the matter of social adaptation, the construction of sociograms, and the interpretation of the questions on some kind of adjustment inventory.

Many avenues toward the understanding of children are opened through professional education. Chief among these avenues are courses taken while one is preparing to be a teacher, in-service training courses, participation in workshops, and correspondence courses. If these formal agencies are not available, there still remains the possibility of engaging in individual and group study and experimentation.

Understanding children is not a simple matter; neither is it so occult that few can aspire to it. It is an undertaking of devotion and hard work; but it will pay dividends in terms of greater personal satisfaction through knowing that children have been helped to achieve better mental health.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Why is it so important for teachers to understand the causes of behavior? Of what significance are symptoms?
2. If conflict is normal, why should an attempt be made to remove obstacles from the child's pathway to growth?
3. Describe an instance in which you have helped a person (child or adult) by being a sympathetic listener.
4. To what extent can finances contribute to a healthy home environment?
5. Can you add to the list of negative home influences (p. 158) any other factors that are commonly observed?
6. If negative home influences cannot be eliminated, is there anything left for the teacher to do?
7. What would you consider to be a minimum testing program for the elementary grades? What would the minimum program be for high school?
8. Describe a technique for putting a program of peer evaluation into operation.
9. What steps would you advise to make professional courses more functional?
10. What errors must be avoided if the teacher is going to engage in personal experimentation?
11. What bearing does the teacher's personal mental health have upon her ability to understand children?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

CROW, LESTER D., and ALICE CROW, *Mental Hygiene in School and Home Life*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1942. 474 pp.

This is a book for teachers, supervisors, and parents dealing with a positive approach to mental hygiene. Consideration of the needs of children and what happens when those needs are not met leads to a discussion of plans for improving the home and school life of youngsters so that their chances for genuine maturity are enhanced.

HOHMAN, LESLIE B., *As the Twig Is Bent*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. 286 pp.

A psychiatrist describes down-to-earth procedures for preventing and remedying behavior difficulties in children. The theme is that no behavior is repeated that is not successful in the eyes of the doer. The author subscribes to some of the "new" techniques and evaluates the good and bad of both older and modern views of child treatment. Teachers and parents will profit from the reading of this sound discussion.

HYMES, JAMES L., JR., *Teachers Listen. The Children Speak . . .*, New York: New York Committee on Mental Hygiene of the State Charities Aid Association, 1949. 44 pp.

The author clearly and concisely presents the view that children—and the individual child—are stating that something is wrong when they "misbehave." The language of action is something to which effective teachers must give attention. This booklet provides some clues to the translation of the language of behavior.

WOOD, THOMAS D., and MARION OLIVE LERRIGO, *The Healthy Personality*, Bloomington, Ill.: Public School Publishing Company, 1935. 40 pp.

A goal for instruction, the development of a healthy personality, is described in precise behavior characteristics. The authors then show how to analyze difficulties and adapt curricular procedures, teaching methods, and special services to solve the problems.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Helping the Child Accept the Do's, Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., 342 Madison Ave., New York. (10 min, BW, sd.)

Portrays the child's learning to live in a world defined by the Do's, and explains how his personality is influenced by the extent to which the Do's are accepted. Illustrates, with life situations, the types of Do's the child must learn to accept: (1) the Do's for personal living, (2) the masculine and feminine Do's, and (3) the Do's for human relations.

Helping the Child Accept the Don'ts, EBF. (10 min, BW, sd.)

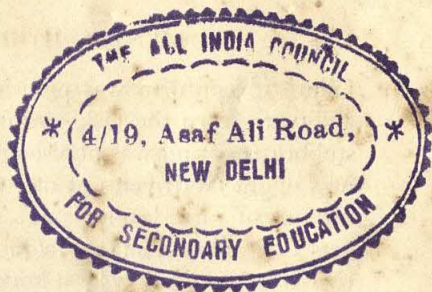
Reveals how the young child meets a world of Don'ts and how he reacts by conforming in his own distinctive ways, thus forming his own individual personality. Classifies the Don'ts as: (1) those which protect the child from danger, (2) those which restrain him from taking things that belong to others, and (3) those which teach him to respect the rights of others.

Learning to Understand Children, Part I, a Diagnostic Approach, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42nd St., New York 36. (21 min, BW, sd.)

This is an outstanding film, which literally shows this chapter in action: Problem behavior, teacher listens, observes, and studies. The home is visited and peer evaluations are demonstrated.

Learning to Understand Children, Part II, a Remedial Program, McGraw-Hill (23 min, BW, sd.).

This is a continuation of the above story of Ada Adams. The classroom teacher develops a simple but highly effective program for capitalizing on Ada's assets.



THE MENTAL HYGIENE OF DISCIPLINE

THERE WAS a time in educational history when the ability to "discipline" was the *sine qua non* of holding a teaching position. The individual who could put fear into pupils was a successful teacher. If the teacher could not make pupils fear him, he could at least discipline through physical force. The birch rod or the willow switch was as necessary a part of classroom equipment as were slates and crayons. The motto "Learn or get out" was prominently displayed in some classrooms. The first question asked of a prospective teacher was, "Can you maintain discipline?" The effective teacher, regardless of what the pupils learned, was one who was able to keep good order in the classroom. Discipline was definitely of the authoritarian type.

This concept of discipline is definitely unpopular today, if it has not been completely repudiated. But there is a possibility that, in the course of getting away from this concept, the pendulum has swung too far. There are at least a few teachers who seem to have come to believe that there is no place for discipline in a modern, successful school. The idea that there should be no discipline is as deleterious to the growth of pupils as was the old, martinet viewpoint. That the teacher be able to maintain discipline is still of major importance, but a marked change has developed (at least theoretically) as to the meaning of discipline and the methods of achieving it. The concept of what discipline is and how it should be accomplished is one of the foremost problems in the study of mental hygiene.

THE MEANING OF DISCIPLINE

Earlier Concepts of Discipline. Earlier concepts of discipline were borrowed from our European prototypes, which were seeking to prepare pupils to take their places in a class-structured society. The aim was to teach conformity and obedience. Although American schools were intended to prepare pupils for effective citizenship in a democratic society, the emphasis was still on conformity and obedience. A pupil who questioned the word of a teacher was regarded as an upstart, who deserved immediate and harsh condemnation. The teacher's word was law and

failure to conform was punished by use of the hickory stick. Even inability to learn the tasks required was thought to be evidence of innate stubbornness and was punishable by a caning, in order that such perverseness might be driven out of the developing individual. Whispering, talking out of turn, leaving one's seat or the room without permission were acts of insubordination. In fact, as we look back at the school regimes that were extant fifty or a hundred years ago, we marvel at the toughness of spirit that made it possible for any of the pupils to reach a sane, hearty, and sometimes happy adulthood.

Contemporary View of Discipline. Both the method and the aim of discipline in today's school are different from those of former years. Today the aim is to secure good order and socially oriented self-direction. Order which stems from compulsion is not necessarily good discipline—in fact, when the external controls are relaxed, there is often a marked disruption of the "good order" which is so highly prized. Order which stems from attention to purposeful activity will usually be less than the "pin-drop silence" type, but it will persist even without adult control. Observance of group welfare, conformity to legal requirements, and temporarily putting aside one's own immediate wishes are lessons that must be learned by every individual who is to have mental health. The necessity for doing some things which we would rather not do is a characteristic of adult society. Discipline may, then, be defined as the hearty performance of duties, as well as freely chosen activities, in an orderly manner, with such an understanding (purposeful activity) that due regard is given to the rights and privileges of others.

A major aim of contemporary discipline is to help the young person become increasingly independent. Instead of a desire to make pupils into carbon copies of our own acknowledgedly imperfect selves, there is the aim to encourage the development of each individual's unique personality so that he can make a contribution to society that is not made by anyone else, and so that he will gain the satisfaction of realizing the more complete fruition of his own strong points.

Obviously, this kind of emphasis indicates that there must be no confusion between the meaning of liberty and of license. License, which in this connection means assuming the right to do what one wishes without regard to the desires of others, must be contrasted with liberty, which means freedom to do what one wishes as long as it does not interfere with a like amount of liberty for one's associates. To have independence means that one may choose his own actions, without external direction and still remain a member of a socially oriented group. In a way, this concept is now at work in our schools. In the elementary school there is usually a large amount of teacher direction. In the secondary school direction becomes somewhat less evident—students are free to study what

they wish during their study periods. In college there is practically no supervision of study—completion of assignments is the students' responsibility. Presumably, the Ph.D. is capable of making his own study assignments and executing them without direction—he has finally arrived at independence.

There is, however, a great necessity for creating situations that will bring independence of action before postgraduate work is undertaken. Fortunately, there are numerous indications that such independence can be achieved much more rapidly. As grade-school pupils are given further opportunities to be self-directive, disciplined independence will be more and more likely to be attained before the college and university years. When given an opportunity, children continually surprise adults with their ability to be intelligently self-directive.

Another important aspect of the present view of discipline is acceptance of the idea that punishment is largely directed toward the symptoms of misbehavior instead of being useful as a means of getting at the causes. Imposed discipline has a tendency to follow misbehavior, whereas self-discipline precedes behavior. Discipline should, most desirably, be a personal direction of actions that are purposeful and self-determined. Certainly, the present view is in hearty accord with a basic principle of mental hygiene, *i.e.*, that causes must be determined before an attack on symptoms can be very successful. Authoritarian discipline often gets the immediately desired result of conformity, but in far too many cases the tension takes some other form of expression. A teacher may get silence in the classroom upon emphatic demand, but the suppressed tensions of the students find vent in writing on the hallway walls, defacing the desks and tables, and breaking fixtures in the lavatories. For instance, in a school where autocratic discipline prevailed, upon the insistence of the superintendent, where there was good order in the classroom, pupils did not talk back to the teachers, lessons were done on time, and no one thought of running in the hallway, there was still evidence of a lack of discipline. The school building was broken into on several occasions, supplies were strewn about, books were thrown from the shelves, and there was considerable breakage in out-of-the-way places. Immediately observable symptoms could be dealt with, but the tensions which had created the desire for misbehavior found other outlets.

Constructive discipline may be defined as training or instruction that molds, improves, strengthens, corrects, or improves behavior. There is no doubt that discipline is needed. The important question is, what methods should be used in the process of disciplining. The ideal for the classroom teacher is that the necessity for arbitrary control should be forestalled by the discipline imposed by purposeful activity.

Values and Outcomes of Effective Discipline. Discipline is an essential factor both in securing the optimum development of individual potentialities and in living harmoniously and productively in social groups. Discipline, as socially oriented self-direction, is a requisite to wholesome mental and physical health. Since in our society it is unlikely and undesirable that a person be supervised at all times by another who holds a place of authority, it is essential that discipline shall come from within. Effective internal discipline should result in a reduction in the occurrence of mental illness. Although it may not be safe to call autocratic discipline a cause of maladjustment, it may safely be claimed as a contributing factor. When disciplinary measures serve to stir up and aggravate tensions and, at the same time, prohibit the release of the feelings aroused, a growing, festering emotion is created. Many children are fortunate enough to find ways to express their emotions both in and out of school; others have enough tension-tolerance to stand up under the onslaught of tension. Some, however, break down while attending school and others carry their tensions into adulthood as weaknesses in their emotional stability. The individual who has learned to depend on his own resources for solving problems, rather than having to lean on adult authority and edict, will have found out that experiment and trial are not always successful and will be capable of disciplining himself to try again.

Effective discipline will teach the same lessons that are pursued by means of domineering discipline. There will be reasonable conformity, there will be a respect for the rights of others, there will be observance of law and order. There will be a respect for law and for people—a respect that arises out of understanding and appreciation, rather than a simulated respect in response to demand. In fact, there are many school people who are insisting that, while you can demand conformity, you must earn respect. Such respect is an outgrowth of the opportunity to participate in common problems and the feeling that one has a stake in the success of the cooperative activity which is taking place. This difference of attitude can easily be recognized when an autocratic classroom where there are opposing camps of teacher and students is contrasted with a classroom where the feeling has developed that all are embarked on a common enterprise.

Another value of effective discipline is that it provides a field for the development of social awareness and practice in group participation. The individual, by himself participating in the planning and carrying out of policy, is brought to a realization that others have wishes and rights that sometimes apparently conflict with his own. Since he knows that others sometimes accept his viewpoint, he can more readily accept the fact that it is sometimes necessary to consider the will and the wish of others. This insight is not one which is automatically achieved just because the

legal age has been attained. It is the product of repeated and progressive experience. To be most fully productive, the experiences should be begun at an early age.

All of this adds up to saying that effective discipline prepares one for significant participation in democratic processes. Conformity is required, but stereotyped activity is a restrictive influence on a functioning democracy. Democracy recognizes the worth of the individual and prizes the fact that different individuals have the ability to make different contributions to group welfare; it therefore profits from a discipline in which individual purposeful activity is emphasized. Thus, effective discipline not only is a means of the more complete fulfillment of the individual (a salutary influence on mental health), but it is basic to the functioning of the theory upon which our social and political life is based.

One of the often mentioned criteria of maturity is self-reliance. Effective discipline will lead to the individual's becoming increasingly less dependent on others. Just as the desired outcome of parental control is to lessen the need for parents, so the outcome of effective educational practice should be the ability of the individual to analyze his own problems, seek information on them, and solve them. Again, as, in the case of parental control, the child actually becomes more devoted to his parents as he needs them less, so the student will be more devoted to the constant learning that effective living requires, when he can choose and pursue his own goals. Thus a wise discipline prepares the individual for productive citizenship as it improves his mental health.

A basic need which is met through the discipline of purposeful activity is the need to satisfy curiosity. We need only look back upon our own educational experiences to know that many of the tasks which we performed in school dulled curiosity by prescribing the sources of information and determining the methods by which the results of study were to be reported. In fact, learning became an activity that was disliked because its course was dictated by the threat of failure, detention, and the taking away of privileges. Many people have not had tension-tolerance enough to withstand the negative pressures imposed by traditional discipline and have entirely turned away from formal learning pursuits.

Perhaps the most important aspect of purposeful discipline is inherent in its relation to the importance of getting the right start. When the developmental nature of personality is examined, we come to a fresh realization that new behaviors do not suddenly appear. It is impossible for one to be ready to take up adult responsibilities if he has become accustomed to having his plans and methods laid down for him. Fortunately, there are employers who give employees a chance to develop self-directed discipline, and the individual can make belated growth toward independence. Some, however, cannot outgrow their earlier in-

fluences and must remain dependent upon the edict and direction of others.

Summary: The Role of Discipline. The definition of discipline cited above implies the over-all purpose—that of improving behavior. Improvement should be directed toward the achievement of psychologically (not just chronologically) mature conduct; in short, the ultimate goal is to make the individual increasingly self-directive. The self-direction must, in order to be mature, take cognizance of the fact that individuals live in social groups where others have comparable rights, liberties, and restrictions.

Discipline in the classroom has a threefold purpose. (1) It should remove distracting factors from the teaching-learning situation and so direct activity that learning will take place in as economical a fashion as possible. (2) The mental health and physical safety and well-being of all pupils must be safeguarded while they are under school auspices. (3) Practice in conformity, cooperation, leadership-followership, and personal accountability should be provided that will prepare students for all that responsible citizenship implies.

It is important for both pupils and teachers to understand the constructive role of discipline if mental health is to be attained and maintained. Lack of discipline in the school and the home tends to produce unhappy children, because they do not learn the important lesson that bending to the will and wishes of others is a necessity if they are to get along in social groups. There are many adults who manifest symptoms of mental illness which is at least partially due to their never having learned either internal discipline or the necessity for conforming to external controls. These symptoms take such forms as crime, excessive use of alcohol, cheating for selfish purposes, inability to hold a job, dissatisfaction in marriage relations, and lack of determination in pursuing an objective.

FACTORS IN WHOLESOME DISCIPLINE

Now that the worth of discipline which develops in the individual himself has been established as a contributing factor to mental health, we may proceed to a discussion of the factors that will tend to foster the development of wholesome discipline. It should be borne in mind, throughout the discussion and while the theory is being applied in the classroom, that the aim of discipline is to make the authority of the teacher less and less necessary as pupils develop their own capacity for control.

Teacher Direction Has Its Place in Effective Discipline. It is not to be expected that pupils will be ready to assume responsibility for self-direction simply because the teacher suddenly decides that adult domina-

tion should be lessened. Particularly as self-direction is begun as an emphasis in the classroom, it may be necessary to call some pupils to order. They will appreciate this if it is fairly and kindly, even though firmly, done. It may be necessary to demand attention from one or two who are just "trying the teacher out." Often misbehavior does not indicate some deep-seated difficulty, but merely shows that the students have found they can get away with something. This is just as true in the first grade as it is in the senior high school. No harm will be done to a "delicate personality" if the pupils understand that ultimately the teacher is responsible for acceptable classroom conduct. Authority has a place in healthy, democratic discipline. A factor in democratic living which is sometimes overlooked is that specialized and expert judgment may be more effective at times than uninformed group decisions. Governmental, industrial, and educational organizations all make use of specialists and experts. Children should learn that properly constituted authority is not an infringement upon their personal liberty. However, as time goes on, such abrupt methods of control should tend to be used less and less or even abandoned.

One of the First Considerations in Contemporary Discipline Should Be an Understanding of the Nature of Children. This will include, among other things, the understanding that frequently their actions are not in agreement with their intentions. Many times their conduct is the result of ill-conceived experimentation rather than malicious intent. It should be remembered that growth takes place on uneven fronts, and because the students have gained independence in one area does not necessarily mean that they can reasonably be expected to be independent in all activities. The degree of pupil control should vary with the situation. It is natural for students to desire freedom of movement. To restrict this freedom unnecessarily is to ignore one of their innate drives. Likewise, it may be necessary to provide for rest from both physical and mental activities—the needs for both kinds of refreshment being based on the fact that immaturity makes concentration on either physical or mental activities, for prolonged periods, difficult.

An outstanding requirement for understanding children is the need for recognizing the individuality of each child. Just as effective teaching is dependent upon understanding the interests and abilities of individuals in the class, so discipline is dependent upon the need for recognizing the uniqueness of each. Spontaneity in voice and action may be difficult for one child to avoid and for another child to accomplish. In short, it is necessary to give up expecting or hoping that all pupils can be forced into any kind of mold. Respect for the individual person can be shown by calling each of the pupils by name, by saying "please" and "thank you," and by smiling when speaking to them. Above all, this respect

for children as persons should imply that the teacher knows enough about the background of each to be able to judge when a bit of behavior is really out of line with his nature, his background tensions, and his disappointments.

Wholesome Discipline Requires That Shaming, Sarcasm, and Ridicule Be Avoided. Any procedures which belittle another person may either tend to undermine his own sense of worth or they will serve to stimulate resentments that are destructive to a cheerful classroom atmosphere. When sarcasm and ridicule are used there is a diminishing of the likelihood that the school will meet the need the pupil has for security, for recognition, and, to an extent, for a feeling of companionship with the teacher—if not with fellow students. Each of us knows from personal experiences alone that expressions and statements which humiliate tend to break down the group cohesiveness which is an aspect of democratic living. Corporal punishment administered in public is one way of violating this principle. Sarcasm, ridicule, offensive comparisons (any personal comparisons are likely to give offense), and attempts to shame the student must be avoided consistently. Any words or actions which undermine a pupil's feeling of personal worth must be heartily condemned from the mental hygiene viewpoint, even though the immediate response may be conformity.

Discipline should be based upon the concepts of courtesy and kindness rather than upon blind conformity to laws, rules, and regulations. This approach, too, should be the outgrowth of pupil experiences and group discussion instead of being adopted because of a teacher's precept or prompting. The significance of the adult's example is illustrated in an anecdote about a mother who took her young son to a psychologist. When she said, "I just don't know how I can teach Tommy to be courteous," the psychologist asked her, "Do you say 'Please' and 'Thank you'?"

Keep Pupils Busy with Interesting Tasks. The definition of interest supplies the clue to appropriate procedures. Interest is the identification of the individual with some object, goal, or person. Identification in this sense is not unlike the defense mechanism, since it implies a feeling of oneness with, a community of feeling. Interesting tasks are those which the pupil feels are significant in terms of his own being and aims, he understands them as having a relationship to his own needs and wants. Under such conditions there is less need for imposed discipline. Busy and interested pupils have no time for acts that would keep them back from their accepted goals; and activities that interfere with accepted objectives are the ones which are objectionable and annoying to the classroom teacher. This means that teachers have the responsibility for clarifying the goals to be aimed at and reminding students of them.

Emphasize the Rewards Which Are Inherent in the Work at Hand.

While this does not necessarily mean that rewards and prizes have no place in motivation, it does mean that prizes should serve to lead up to intrinsic motivation. The more quickly the shift to intrinsic motivation—the will to carry on pursuits for the satisfaction to be found in the tasks themselves—can be made, the greater will be the assurance that continuous learning will become an experience personally desirable to the learner. Praise for work done, acknowledgment of individual contributions, and the display of results are means by which the rewards that exist in the task itself can be kept in the minds of pupils.

The discipline of purposeful activity should be used as consistently as is possible. This means that all teachers have the responsibility of helping each child understand the functions of school work in personal terms. All teachers should be prepared in advance to answer the question "So what?" regarding subject matter, whether or not it is actually asked. The teacher who cannot figure out the best reason in the world for teaching the worst subject is likely to be ineffective. When pupils clearly perceive the purposes of their study and work they are unlikely to need dogmatic control. All this implies that, whatever the school tasks are, they must be within the ability and understanding of the pupil.

Strict Domination Should Be Avoided. The uniformity of conduct stressed in strict domination is contradictory to the innate and acquired differences which exist between pupil and pupil. While there must be order underlying productive work, the lock-step procedures all too often used in classrooms do not bring about continuously productive activity. It has been shown above that classroom docility lasts only as long as the dominating authority is present. Work is done under compulsion rather than spontaneously, with the result that, as an inevitable accompaniment, a distaste for work is acquired. Freedom is more than an ideal; it is a practical principle.

Recognize the Mores Existing in the Group. This factor is related to understanding the nature of children; but it takes cognizance of the fact that mores differ between one community and another. Local variations in style of dress, hair-dos (including boys' styles), colloquialisms, and political and social attitudes should not be brusquely attacked by the teacher. He must recognize their origin and, even if they are objectionable, must use respect and tolerance in dealing with them. One violation of group mores too common among teachers is demanding that pupils report the misconduct of other pupils. This encouragement of "tattling" puts the student in an equivocal position: if he reports, he is condemned by his group, and if he remains silent, he feels the disapproval of his teacher. In either case, he will suffer from indecision and doubt, and that will threaten his feelings of security. A recognition of mores does not

imply sanctioning them, but it calls for an evaluation of them as the basis of understanding and respect.

Seek the Causes of Misbehavior. A precept of mental hygiene often repeated is that the causes of behavior should be sought instead of an attempt's being made to deal with symptoms. At times students do something just because they can get away with it; but usually misbehavior is generated by some tension or deprivation which the child feels. Even though it may sometimes be necessary to correct a pupil's actions immediately, the teacher has a responsibility to search for and, if possible, eliminate the causal factors of misbehavior. Misbehavior, transgression of regulations, ignoring group welfare, neglect of duty are symptoms. They arise from some stimulating circumstances both internal and external. To demand conformity and obedience is in exactly the same category as commanding a pupil to give up daydreaming, to put an end to the tendency to project his difficulties, or to stop biting his nails. While a teacher may point proudly to the fact that he shamed Mary into keeping her thumb out of her mouth, he may not have noticed that Mary's insecurity now shows itself in her withdrawing from the groups in which the teacher works.

The point may be illustrated by some incidents which happened in high school. A boy in a geometry class said that he did not understand the explanation that had just been given by the instructor, whereupon the instructor roared, "Wipe that grin off your face, you big milk-fed lout, or I'll toss you out the window." In another class the lad said, near the close of the period, "It seems to me that this poem is so obscure that reading it is a waste of time." The instructor did not consider it a violation of his personality that such a statement should be made. Instead, he answered, "Well, the time's about up now, but if you'll stay a few minutes we'll go over it together and see if we can't get meaning out of it." This boy, it would seem, was not misbehaving in either instance; but the same responses might have been made if the incident had involved throwing erasers, tripping a classmate, or taking property from its rightful owner. There is a great difference between dealing with symptoms and dealing with causes.

Good Discipline Requires a Confident Teacher Who Has Confidence in His Pupils. Autocratic procedures on the part of the teacher are likely to grow out of his feelings of insecurity. He demands strict conformity and attendance to business because of the fear that things will get out of hand. Two steps may be taken to establish the feeling of confidence that would make repressive discipline unnecessary. One is for the teacher to spend an adequate amount of time in planning and studying how to conduct his class activities. Confidence that one knows one's subject matter is the result of a process of personal growth, not a gift with which one

is born. The second step is to cultivate a classroom atmosphere conducive to good teacher-pupil rapport—one that will actually make it difficult for pupils to do things which they know would be displeasing to the teacher.

Confidence in oneself is only one side of the situation. The teacher must also be confident that his pupils are capable of assuming responsibility. Just as teachers sense and appreciate the confidence placed in them by administrators, so pupils can sense and act upon the confidence teachers have in them. They enjoy living up to expectations. If they know mature conduct is expected, they will strive for it; but if they know that the teacher suspects them of incompetence, it will not likely hurt their feelings to show the teacher that he is right. It is well to set the level of confidence high. On occasion, a student may not be able to live up to the high level of expectation, but that situation will provide an opportunity to stimulate growth by saying, "Well, this was a pretty difficult program for you, but I'm sure that next time you'll come even closer to perfect achievement."

Positive Authority Has a Place in Good Discipline. In spite of the emphasis on student self-direction, it should be clear that the teacher has both the right and the responsibility of exercising authority. Self-direction is the result of a growth process, and a good start may be made by developing an appreciation for order. Pupils should participate in the making of disciplinary policy and should share in carrying out the policy. Teacher leadership will be needed, because young people are known to be harsh when they are responsible for disciplinary measures; however, where growth through practice has been taken into consideration, the results of pupil participation have been not only satisfactory but gratifying. The offender who is caught in the rules he himself established tends to accept the consequences of infringement of rules more graciously.

Particularly in the beginning, teachers may even go so far as to look for opportunities to exercise their authority, so that the pupils will know that firmness will always be used. This is particularly important when the testing of the new teacher is taking place—and this testing will take place until his reputation is well established. There is no conflict between firmness and friendliness, and both are needed in a situation where effective discipline is to lead progressively to more and more independent action.

Teachers are ultimately responsible for disciplinary measures, in spite of the fact that increasing degrees of self-control and intelligent self-direction are the goals of discipline. The teacher is accountable for classroom conduct. Thus, we come back to the first principle, that specialization (in this case through experience and special education) carries with it authority that can be, and should be, used constructively. This point can be discussed in some appropriate group activity, so that pupils will see

the role of specialized responsibility as clearly as they see the significance of their own participation.

The Classroom Atmosphere Should Be Enjoyable. Perhaps this is a summary, rather than another point, but it is important that the classroom atmosphere should be wholesome if good discipline is to be attained. This atmosphere includes the emotional tone pervading the room, as well as the physical conditions. Good lighting, fresh air, proper temperature, decorations, color schemes, chairs and tables that fit, and space in which to move are significant features. Industrial and manufacturing organizations have studied these factors and find that they pay off in terms of additional productiveness—more work accomplished per unit of time and less time lost for absenteeism and personnel turnover. It is difficult to control these factors in experimental learning situations; but experimenters and observers agree that it conserves our most valuable resource—human lives—to give attention to the physical concomitants in a learning and teaching situation.

The emotional tone of the room is probably still more important. The cheer, confidence, humanity, kindness, and relaxed but business-like air of the teacher will quickly be absorbed by the pupils. They in turn will be more cooperative, will work harder, will develop the tension-tolerance that can overlook minor distractions; and the consequence will be more internal discipline, with a reduction in the need for imposed authority.

IMPROVING THE MENTAL HYGIENE VALUES OF DISCIPLINE

Better ways of developing discipline unfold from an understanding of the true nature of discipline and the factors which should be observed for obtaining it. At the expense of some repetition, the following suggestions are presented for implementing a kind of discipline that will improve the pupils' chances for mental health.

Firmness Is Necessary. One of the frequently mentioned criteria of maturity is ability to bend to the wishes and welfare of others. It is a matter of outgrowing the egocentric behavior that is characteristic of childhood and achieving the more altruistic behavior that marks the true adult. It is no kindness to children to allow them to believe that they can consistently have their own way. The sooner they learn the lesson that success in life is to a very large extent dependent upon the ability to get along with others, the better off they will be. Regardless of how vehemently we may declare that "They are children only once," the fact remains that there are "musts" in society. If teachers and parents do not teach the lesson, it will be taught by peer groups, less kindly and with less regard for consequences to the personality. A middle course must be sought between the lack of firmness exhibited in pampering the child and the repressive firmness of autocratic demand. While children should

not be permitted to "rule the roost," care must be taken that orders are not based on the whim of the teacher. The criterion for firmness, therefore, should be, "What action, rules, and mores are in the best interest of the group?" When a child has made little progress toward becoming socially independent (self-disciplined), no harm will be done if the teacher firmly and confidently calls for conformity to the group wishes.

Discipline Should Be Appropriate and Consistent. This is a difficult admonition to clarify because, in order to be appropriate, measures for checking disapproved conduct must be varied. One pupil's unexcused absence from school is not the same as another's absence. Perhaps one lad cut school and had done so frequently because he wanted to go swimming with some of last year's graduates. For him withdrawal of some school privilege (a basketball trip) is appropriate. Another lad cut because he had a chance to work in someone's garden and earn money with which he could buy a cherished biology book. A mere talking to—the teacher might even be convinced that the lad's reasons were valid—might suffice. Appropriate discipline takes into account the individual, the time, the total situation, and the degree to which the behavior differs from the individual's typical responses.

What about the consistency? The consistency comes in uniformly paying attention to a given kind of response and in adjusting corrective procedures to it. The plan is to be sure not to overlook a given response at one time and deal with it decisively and abruptly at another time. If the teacher and the class disapprove of whispering during the time others are presenting materials to the class, the interruption should not be frowned upon at one time and ignored on another occasion.

A Good Adult Example Should Be Set. Much of behavior is learned by direct imitation and much by means of unconscious imitation or suggestion. Pupils try to imitate their admired teachers. Especially in high school, boys and girls consciously aim to pattern their behavior after teachers whom they have selected as "heroes." On this account, the teacher's attitude toward aspects of discipline (lying, cheating, work habits, use of criticism) has direct influence on the conduct of the young people. If they hear the teacher making excuses which they know are not genuine, if they hear him laughing about having been given too much change, if they are present when he criticizes his fellow teachers and administrators, they may think of these behaviors as appropriate. Not only the words he speaks but the attitudes he reveals may be taken as models. Friendliness, fair-mindedness, and respect for others as well as suspicion, jealousy, and bigotry are learned from one's intimates.

Teachers sometimes object to being considered models, because they feel that it is unreasonable to expect them to be paragons of virtue. Fortunately, they do not have to be perfect. Recently, a few practical psy-

chologists have let parents know that occasional lapses from consistent serenity will not irrevocably spoil the growth trends in their offspring. A parent is even allowed to lose control of temper once in a while without having to feel that he has committed an error that cannot be corrected. Teachers are in the same category. They need not feel that they are lost souls if they become irritated now and then. Lapses from admirable behavior will be overlooked by those who are using the teacher as a model. It is the teacher's characteristic, typical behavior—most often seen by the student—that is absorbed into his own reaction patterns. If the teacher cannot always be a perfect example of self-discipline—a few do seem to approach this ideal—he can at least make a consistent effort to grow toward better self-control. It is not going too far to say that the most fortunate pupils are those who can watch their own teacher growing and learning with them. They have a dynamic, a changing, a developing model before them. Anyone who is already perfect, on the other hand, presents a static goal.

Use the Process of Reasoning. It has been emphasized that understanding is necessary to self-discipline. This implies that the teacher should explain to erring students the reasons for rules and regulations in general and the reason for specific requirements in given cases. This reasoning must take place under conditions of emotional calm. If reasoning is attempted in a moment of emotional stress, there is too great a likelihood that what is said will degenerate into wrangling and nagging. Teachers should not expect youngsters, even of high-school age, to understand their own motivation; it is, therefore, not very practical to try to reason with them by asking, "What makes you do this?" or "Why do you act in this way?" Too often, the child honestly does not know the answers to such questions. It would be better to try to have the pupil place himself in the situation of another. Try to get him to see how he would feel on the receiving end of the very behavior he has been indulging in.

It is apparent that reasoning used for disciplinary purposes will be most effective when the conversational approach, rather than the cross-examination method, is used. The talks should take place during a period of emotional calm or neutrality; and the discussion must be held on an objective level. A beginning can be made by analyzing the problems of someone else. This will require time, but in the end, there will be an actual saving of time, as well as an increase in self-respect.

Provide for Substitute Behaviors. Child psychologists, in an attempt to help parents, have emphasized the importance of providing substitute activities for the ones which are denied the child. Instead of the parent's slapping the child's hand for getting into the wrong place (the drawer of kitchen knives) and saying "No, no" or "Stop that," the psychologists recommend that the child be allowed to become aware of the forbidden

area, but that, as a part of the total procedure, he be given something with which he may play safely. Teachers can profit from the same advice. Instead of the child's being forbidden to interrupt what another is presenting in class, he may be asked to wait for his own turn and then make some thought-out contribution. Instead of his being told that he must study, an attempt should be made to discover why he is not interested in the project at hand and to help him find something that will challenge him. At least, an effort might be made to show him why the particular project has reference to his own growth and development. If boys on a basketball trip are acting in a rowdy manner in restaurants, perhaps they need to know just how their behavior can be improved so that they will get attention for behaving as gentlemen should.

Providing substitute activities is not soft pedagogy. It is a recognition of the facts that behavior is caused, that the ultimate aim of discipline is self-direction, that growth is an individual process, and that at last a mature individual must get along without constant supervision. Substitution is a means of recognizing that repression, at best, has only a temporary value. Repression may lead to the individual's harboring resentments and frustrations to the point of his becoming an unbalanced personality; or it may cause the pent-up feelings to be released in antisocial ways as soon as the youngster has left the classroom.

Discipline Should Be Democratic. Democratic discipline has a triple advantage. It is directly in accord with the objectives and principles of our society, and this provides preparation for more effective adulthood. It tends to capitalize on individual assets and thus provides a means of stimulating growth toward independence and self-direction. And, finally, it lessens the chances of generating habits and tensions which are harmful to mental health. These advantages can be noted in classrooms where democratic discipline has been tried; and they are given pointed illustration in the experiments conducted by K. Lewin, R. Lippitt, and R. K. White which are described here.¹

Lewin and others carried on a series of experiments in which artificially created social climates (involving club activities) were compared with regard to their effect on the behavior of ten-year-old boys. One climate was democratic; *i.e.*, policies were matters of group decision, goals were discussed and the leader suggested alternatives, members were free to work with whom they wished, division of tasks was left to the group, and the leader praised or criticized work impersonally. Another climate was authoritarian; *i.e.*, policy was determined by the leader, steps were dictated one at a time, the leader designated working groups and tasks,

¹ Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lippitt, and Ralph K. White, "Patterns of Aggressive Behavior in Experimentally Created 'Social Climates,'" *The Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 10 (May, 1939), pp. 271-299. By permission of the publishers.

and praise and criticism were personal in nature. The third was a laissez-faire group; *i.e.*, there was complete freedom for group or personal decision without leader participation, the leader said he would help if asked but took no other part, groupings were determined without the leader, comments on work were infrequent and no attempt was made to interfere.

The groups were equated as far as possible, and after six weeks the following results were noted. Aggressive actions per meeting were, for the laissez-faire group, thirty-eight; for the autocratic group, thirty; and for the democratic group, twenty. It is to be noted that in the autocratic group some of the boys showed apathetic reactions. Observers judged that the boys were dull, lifeless, and apathetic in the autocratic group with regard to actions that were not of the aggressive type; whereas, actions were spontaneous, fact-minded, and friendly in the democratic group. The boys themselves evaluated their activities and the consensus was that they disliked the leader in the autocratic group but directed their hostility to club members; they appreciated and liked the democratic leader; but they felt that they needed more direction and help than they had in the laissez-faire group. If the leaders left the room, there was a sharp rise in aggression in the autocratic group; whereas, the work continued almost normally in the democratic group. "Scapegoats," boys who were picked on by others, had life made miserable for them in the autocratic group—two such boys dropped out. No such instances were noted in the democratic group. Their pride in work is reflected in the statement, "Rather clearly the work products of this authoritarian atmosphere seemed to be the objects of aggressive attack rather than prideful ownership."²

There were disturbances in the democratic group, but the results as a whole seem to indicate that discipline was of the constructive type. In the autocratic group, undesirable behavior developed promptly. Results similar to those reported have been informally observed in the school classroom. It is to be hoped that the outcome of experiments will give teachers something still more tangible on which to base their approach to constructing an atmosphere which is conducive to internal discipline.

Summary: Implementing the Principles of Constructive Discipline. The underlying principles of discipline that tends to promote good mental health suggest some practices to which teachers may profitably give attention.

1. The original contact with students should be systematically business-like, giving the impression of purposeful activity. Teachers should require pupils to pay attention as the plans for the day or the week are

² *Ibid.*, p. 289. By permission of the publisher.

being laid. Plans for the first day should be complete enough so that there can be no lapse in activities—this is particularly important for the beginning teacher. In order that the first day may give the impression that there is work to be done, business to be conducted, the first meeting should be of full length. The short periods which so frequently characterize the opening of school tend to detract from the serious atmosphere desired. High-school teachers will find this businesslike spirit particularly advantageous.

2. Seek to establish an atmosphere of congeniality and friendliness. Learn the names of the students as quickly as possible—by the end of the first day for homeroom teachers, and by the second period for departmental teachers. As soon as possible learn something unique about each student—where he lives, what his interests are, what special abilities he has, or what he does in his spare time. This can be done through conversation with him, as well as by obtaining information from records.

3. Explain to the pupils specifically what is to be accomplished. Youngsters in the primary and the elementary school will need to have this explanation in terms of immediate goals; whereas, pupils in high school may tend to be satisfied with the outlining of goals which are more remote. In either case, the more immediately attainable some goals are, the greater is the likelihood of getting a response in behavior that is energetically directed. Frequent restatement of the goals and discussion of the degree to which they have been, and are being, accomplished will incite the students to make their efforts more purposeful.

4. Students can be encouraged to take part in making disciplinary policy, and they should also be given responsibility for establishing and maintaining classroom routines. Many teachers, at both the elementary and the secondary level, have discovered that giving pupils special duties to perform (such as attending to ventilation, class registers, distribution of materials, care of equipment, keeping shelves neat and floors clean) reduces the need for imposed controls. Letting students know that their contribution is recognized serves to reinforce their willingness to help. Of course, praise should be given only when it is deserved and censure may be used when it is needed.

5. Courtesy is a matter of spirit as well as form. In short, a teacher should not only habitually say "Thank you" and "Please," whenever courtesy calls for them, but he should have the tone of courtesy in his voice. Teachers should learn to make themselves heard by means of modulated pitch rather than volume of voice. A visitor in almost any school can find in some classroom a teacher who is attempting to overcome the hum of activity by both raising the pitch and increasing the volume of his voice. All teachers can guard against this tendency by careful self-analysis or by requesting an evaluation from a fellow teacher. The inner

poise that comes through having good mental health and the confidence that comes through having work carefully planned will help to control the tensions that show themselves in a strained speaking voice. Adequate rest, recreation, and appropriate diet are factors which help to maintain good physical health and reduce tensions.

6. Try to strengthen the pupil's feelings of personal worth. This can be accomplished by seeing to it that tasks are scaled to his ability, so that the experiences of success and failure will be more properly distributed than they are in the ordinary classroom. Knowing the student thoroughly will help a teacher see opportunities for recognizing the special contribution each child is capable of making. A spirit of genuine friendliness is a prime requisite for stimulating feelings of personal worth.

7. When it is necessary, for the over-all good of the class, misbehavior should be firmly and immediately corrected; but it is important that the teacher should look for the underlying causes. One of the more pervasive principles of mental hygiene in the school is that teachers must distinguish between the symptoms of deviating conduct and the factors that cause the deviation. Study and experience will soon reveal to the teacher that for one kind of behavior there may be many different stimuli; and one stimulus may produce a great variety of responses.

8. Not only is the teacher finally responsible for the discipline in the classroom, but he is also the primary factor in establishing the atmosphere that pervades the room. His personal mental health (including his physical health, his view of the profession, his skill and confidence) is a factor of the highest importance.

HANDICAPS TO IMPROVED DISCIPLINE

The improvement of disciplinary procedures will be the outcome not only of an understanding of the factors which make for good discipline but also of a realization of some of the outstanding obstacles that must be dealt with. The positive factors will be more likely to be put to use if the obstacles are recognized.

Teacher Insecurity or Inadequacy Is a Deterrent to Effective Discipline. Bernice Baxter and Norman Fenton³ cite numerous case studies to show that the insecurity of the teacher is immediately reflected in the conduct of children. When such factors as having been reared by autocratic parents, worry over financial affairs, concern over job tenure, lack of harmonious relations with fellow workers and administrators, and pressing family responsibilities cause the teacher to feel insecure, he is likely to create a tense classroom atmosphere. This, in turn, reacts on the pupils,

³ Bernice Baxter, *Teacher-Pupil Relationships*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934; Norman Fenton, *Mental Hygiene in School Practice*, Stanford University, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1943.

who may be stimulated to acts of misconduct or, at the very least, be disposed to emotional outbreaks. The teacher then becomes more irritated and the tension is heightened. The teacher's insecurity also may make the normal behavior of youngsters appear to him as symptoms of disobedience and rebellion. Thus, both the view and the situation are altered by the teacher's emotional state.

The inadequacy of the teacher has the same effect. If his lesson plans are inadequately prepared, or if his knowledge of the subject matter as a whole is not sufficient, he dreads having the students ask questions that will reveal his lack of knowledge. He will probably attempt to forestall such a revelation by sticking closely to a rigid plan and not allowing an opportunity for asking questions or introducing collateral materials. A teacher's inadequacy may also spring from a lack of knowledge of the general principles of child growth and the psychology of childhood and adolescence. This leads to a misinterpretation of behavior and a lack of understanding of the pupils' motives.

It is highly important for teachers to understand the dynamic role they play in shaping the classroom situations that generate the apparent need for imposed discipline. It will not do to place the blame on the school situation as a whole, though it must be admitted that this can be a factor. Anyone who has the opportunity to observe the conduct of classes can objectively report having found a number of individual classrooms in which work is going forward in a free and relaxed atmosphere, with a spirit of enjoyment and energy. It will pay the teacher to look within himself when he is seeking to remove the obstacles to good discipline.

An Outmoded Philosophy of Education Handicaps Discipline. Entire books have been written on philosophies of education; and there is by no means universal agreement on what the tenets of a sound philosophy should be. However, upon a few points which relate directly to the matter of discipline there is widespread, if not universal, agreement.

One aspect of philosophy which bears directly on discipline has to do with the emphasis placed on the mastery of subject matter, as contrasted with that on pupil growth and development. The two are not necessarily in opposition to each other; in fact, most desirably, they should be emphasized side by side. There is no intention here of minimizing the importance of subject matter. But for the sake of emphasizing the discipline of purposeful activity, primary importance should be given to pupil development. Many of the difficulties in discipline in the school arise because so much emphasis is placed on subject-matter mastery that individual differences in ability and interest are completely ignored. This obviously leads to the creation of tensions, which, in turn, lead to the need for external control. When teachers accept the view that subject

matter is only a means of fostering pupil growth and not an end in itself, a long step toward more effective discipline will have been taken.

An encouraging degree of growth has taken place in recent years in the direction of evaluating what constitutes pupil misbehavior. Few teachers would agree with the motto "Learn or get out," which prevailed in some old-time schools. No longer is it believed that failure to learn is due to an innate perverseness, which should be beaten out of the child. Slowness in learning is not considered misbehavior; according to the view that prevails today, it is, instead, a symptom that something is wrong—with the child, the curriculum, or the method. Not very long ago, in terms of the total background of educational history, E. K. Wickman ⁴ found, many teachers considered such irregularities as standing on the wrong side of the desk to recite, making too much noise with pens and pencils, failure to put down a pencil immediately, and not keeping straight lines in passing to be serious manifestations of behavior. Teachers today, for the most part, think such a view ludicrous. Whispering, failure to listen, and neglect of homework are still frowned upon, but they are seldom treated as serious. Recent studies ⁵ show that the view of teachers as to what constitutes behavior problems is coming closer to what mental hygienists count as behavior that warrants attention. "Misbehavior" is more and more being looked upon as a symptom that the child is in need of help in his personal adjustment problems. As more school workers take the view of mental hygienists, teachers will find less unpleasantness connected with discipline, and the effect will be a much more salutary situation for pupils.

Another factor relating to discipline and educational philosophy has to do with responsibility for conduct. In the past, this was thought to rest solely upon the teacher. As has already been indicated, the test of effectiveness in teaching was the ability to maintain discipline, and the teacher was the big boss. Any attempt on the part of some adventurous pupil to suggest that pupils participate in rule making was looked upon as evidence of subversion or a rebellious attitude. Today, an increasingly large number of teachers, without neglecting their own responsibility, look upon discipline as a group concern. Students have a voice in the regulations which govern them, they have their committees to make suggestions to the group, and they delegate responsibility to members of the group to see that the decisions are executed. When discipline is a group

⁴ E. K. Wickman, *Children's Behavior and Teachers' Attitudes*, New York: The Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1928.

⁵ D. B. Ellis and L. W. Miller, "Teachers' Attitudes and Child Behavior Problems," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 27 (October, 1936), pp. 501-511; Donald James, *An Investigation of Teachers' Attitudes Concerning Children's Behavior*, unpublished bachelor's thesis, Portland, Ore.: Reed College, 1950.

concern, experience in taking individual responsibility for conduct is provided, and an opportunity is offered to practice the philosophy of our political and social tradition.

The Belief That Punishment Is an Efficacious Method of Behavior Control Is an Obstacle to Good Discipline. A study of the history of penal methods indicates that punishment has uniformly been a failure as far as improved behavior control is concerned. The large number of those who have relapsed into crime, in institutions which use repressive methods of punishment on their inmates, had for a long time been attributed to the deep-seated criminality of the convict. Today, more and more criminologists believe that much more effective methods of control can be substituted for punishment. There is an increased emphasis upon the search for background causes of criminality, upon devising methods for removing or ameliorating these causes, and upon attempts to substitute better responses rather than to drive out undesirable ones. This is accomplished by trying to create individual feelings of worth, by teaching productive skills, and by giving the criminal relative freedom and more responsibility. Although the press of numbers in prisons is so great that serious obstacles stand in the way of putting such methods to the test, there is widespread agreement that the rehabilitation of inmates is more efficient than action that is directed toward retribution and punishment has been. While punishment may serve to protect others from criminals and is thus justified in particular cases, the fact remains that it is virtually noneffective in bringing about reform of the criminal.

Punishment imposed on pupils in the school has a still less secure basis than has punishment used in dealing with criminals. The control is external and does nothing to secure the internal direction that is desirable in our society. Although punishment may produce immediate conformity, there is too much danger of serious disorder as a reaction to this method, when the pupil is removed from the reigning authority, to justify its use in school.

The only justification for punishment is to prevent the child from doing something that would be injurious to himself or to others. It should be a deterrent and should stop there. At the time that one type of conduct is interfered with the possibility of another course of action should be presented clearly to the child. In this manner he learns to substitute a desirable action for one that would have been undesirable.⁶

John J. B. Morgan lists as possible pernicious results of arbitrary punishment the following: trickery to outwit adults, hatred of adults, the development of attitudes of fear, and manifestations of cruelty and in-

⁶ John J. B. Morgan, *Child Psychology*, 3d ed., New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1942, pp. 236-237. By permission of the publisher.

tolerance.⁷ Thus, punishment interferes with the accomplishment of some of the habits and attitudes we seek to inculcate into mentally healthy students.

Failure to Recognize Individual Differences and Individual Worth Is an Obstacle to Effective Discipline. There are two outstanding reasons why failure to recognize individual differences interferes with wholesome discipline. The first has to do with the fact that, unless differences are recognized, the behavior is likely to be dealt with, rather than the child. Attention is turned upon the symptom of behavior rather than upon the cause of the action. Teachers tend to adopt rules and regulations that have to do with the act, rather than with the actor. It has been shown that similar behavior has different meanings for different persons; and this must be recognized by the teacher. The second reason grows directly out of these considerations; it is that procedures of discipline have varying meanings for different persons. Thus, one child may be able to shrug off harsh remarks, while another may become deeply depressed by the same words. One student may be glad to be kept after school because it provides an excuse for neglect of home duties, while another may lose his part-time job because his employer thinks him to be unreliable.

In several obvious ways failure to recognize individual worth interferes with discipline. External control carries with it the implication that one is incapable of making wise decisions for himself. Moreover, such control denies the opportunity for exercise that would help to build up progressive improvement in self-direction. Harsh words and physical violence inhibit feelings of worth. This point is recognized even by those who condone punishment, because they advise that such methods should at least be used in private. Shaming, belittling, personal sarcasm, and personal comparisons are other common techniques by means of which feelings of individual worth are undermined. Obviously, these techniques have no place in educational procedures which profess to be aiming at developing members of society who will be better adjusted personally and socially. There are many good reasons why consideration of individual differences warrants the attention of teachers, but it is unlikely that any of these reasons transcend in importance their implications for constructive discipline.

The Expectation That Control Can Be Achieved Suddenly Is an Obstacle to Improved Discipline. Failure to recognize a fundamental growth principle in the development of the discipline of self-control causes teachers to look upon self-direction with skepticism. This principle is that growth takes place continuously and gradually rather than by leaps and bounds. It takes practice to make a person self-directing and inde-

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

pendent. But since it does require practice, there is little hope that the demand for unquestioning compliance throughout the years in school will result in self-direction when the school years have passed. Neither at the first-grade level nor during the senior year in high school would a teacher's lecturing on the advantages of personal control result in a sudden change in pupils' viewpoints. The implication is that small beginnings, followed by extended opportunities for pupil self-direction, provide the chances for development of the mental hygiene viewpoint of discipline.

The continuity of development might cause some teachers, particularly at the secondary level, to give up hope because previous practice in self-direction had been lacking. Such a view is needlessly pessimistic. Another growth principle will come to the aid of the teacher in such a situation; namely, that learning and the development of skills are dependent upon the level of maturation of the individual. Secondary-school pupils are more mature in physique and intelligence, if not in matters of experience, than are pupils in the elementary school. Therefore, they will learn more readily the lessons set before them. In short, their progress in learning self-direction will be more rapid than that of their younger schoolmates when the proper situations are provided, because they can better understand what is implied. But this does not mean that the elementary teacher need have no concern about the matter because it will be taken care of later. In the first place, not all pupils go on to the secondary school. Those who do not go on have a right to be given a chance to learn the advantageous lesson of independence of action and thought. In the second place, overlearning is an economic principle of learning. The secondary pupil who has had prior practice will learn this important lesson more thoroughly. Furthermore, there is a danger that some of the past habits and conditionings that have shaped the present secondary-school pupil may make it difficult, if not impossible, for him to learn the lesson. Teachers who take the mental hygiene viewpoint of discipline must start where they are, with confidence in their ability to capitalize on the capacity youth has for growth.

SUMMARY

The concept of discipline as the need to break the will of the child by external force has been replaced in contemporary educational theory by the idea that wholesome discipline is self-directed, socially oriented behavior that stems from purposeful activity. Discipline is as vital to effective living today as it ever has been. Happy and productive citizens must learn that the welfare of others is a means of securing their own personal enjoyment of living. This is most easily accomplished when each person can perceive his own identity with the group.

Wholesome discipline can be developed when teacher direction is positive but also cooperative, fair, consistent, and attentive to individual differences. Such discipline depends on teachers who have a thorough knowledge of growth principles in general and an appreciation of the specific causes of behavior in terms of the school and out-of-school backgrounds of individuals. When these factors are known, there is little chance, aside from fundamental insecurity and maladjustment on the part of the teacher, that such means of correction as shaming, sarcasm, and ridicule will have a place in his disciplinary repertoire.

The newer concept of discipline requires that remedial measures be consistent and appropriate, that a good example of self-control in behavior be set by the teacher, and that to as great an extent as possible substitute activities be provided rather than that a demand be made for undesirable behaviors to be given up. Group control, based on the process of reasoning, is the major objective of discipline because it is a means of developing well-adjusted individuals who will have had the advantage of practice in democratic methods.

Among the handicaps to the achievement of improved procedures of discipline in the classroom, one of the most important is a lack of fundamental security and confidence characterizing the teacher himself. Fortunately, there are known techniques for overcoming this drawback. Another handicap, still centering about the teacher, has to do with accepting contemporary educational philosophy and shaking off the belief that harsh punishment has a helpful influence on the one who is punished. Other obstacles to improved discipline arise from a failure to recognize individual worth and individual differences or from a lack of appreciation of what is implied in the belief that growth takes place continuously and gradually.

The attainment of better disciplinary procedures will have the two-fold effect of improving the mental health of pupils and making the work of the teacher more genuinely enjoyable.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Summarize the view of ten experienced teachers regarding what they think are the fundamentals of good classroom discipline. Does their consensus agree with the view presented in this chapter?
2. Can you think of any occasions on which the use of physical punishment would be justifiable?
3. How would the concept of discipline in a democratic society differ from that which might be utilized in an autocratic social organization?
4. Visit two or three high-school classes and note particularly the techniques which are used to secure discipline. Report the results in class.
5. Describe the function of "teacher authority" in an elementary classroom. Would this differ from the function of a teacher in high school?

6. Why is an understanding of children a factor of prime importance in salutary discipline?
7. Cite some examples which illustrate capitalizing on the rewards inherent in performing the task at hand.
8. Does consistency of discipline mean the same treatment for the same offense for all children? Do you agree that "what's fair for one is fair for all"?
9. Can you recall, from your own experience, an example of the teacher's behavior being reflected in his pupils' behavior?
10. At what "level" in school can student government be instituted?
11. Cite some evidence that punishment is an ineffective means of treating delinquents and criminals. What view of dealing with crime would justify punishment?
12. What kind of discipline was, or would have been, most effective as far as you are personally concerned?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

BARUCH, DOROTHY W., *New Ways in Discipline*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949. 294 pp.

The author has united currently accepted theories of wholesome child development with workable suggestions for developing self-discipline. She points the way toward a better understanding of the child and his emotions. Her approach is essentially constructive rather than repressive.

BEVERLY, BERT IRA, *In Defense of Children*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1941. 233 pp.

Psychological problems of children from birth through adolescence are discussed. This book will be of particular value to teachers who wish to utilize modern concepts of effective teaching. It is readable, authoritative, and stimulating.

BLACK, IRMA, *Off to a Good Start*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1946. 256 pp.

This book is designed primarily for parents, but it presents a sound view of the nature (and wide variations) of normal behavior that will be profitable for teachers to study. Family relationships are considered and then wider social relations of the growing child are discussed. One section deals with beginning school experiences. The book is sound and easy to read.

CUTTS, NORMA E., and NICHOLAS MOSELEY, *Practical School Discipline and Mental Hygiene*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941. 324 pp.

The prevention of disciplinary problems is accomplished through stimulating better behavior. The authors evaluate behavior and the use of punishment and then proceed to the outlining of a teacher's program for improvement along constructive lines. Case studies are used to illustrate the procedures and results.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Democracy, Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., 342 Madison Ave., New York. (11 min, BW, sd.)

Discusses the nature and meaning of democracy. Its two unique characteristics—shared respect and shared power—are defined and described.

Despotism, EBF. (11 min, BW, sd.)

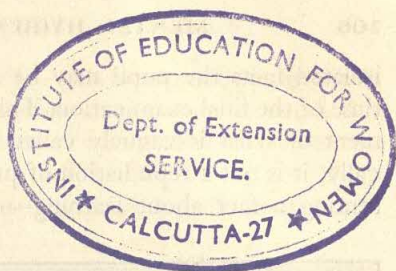
Illustrates the thesis that all communities can be ranged on a scale running from democracy to despotism. The two chief characteristics of despotism—restricted respect and concentrated power—are defined and illustrated.

Guidance Problem for School and Home, Teachers College, Columbia University, Bureau of Publications, 525 W. 120th St., New York 27. (18 min, BW, sd.)

Danny's social adjustment and schoolwork are poor. He has ability but lacks interest. Danny's parents have conflicting attitudes toward him. His teacher discusses the problem with Danny's mother and the principal, and all work with Danny for improved adjustment.

Meeting Emotional Needs of Childhood: The Groundwork of Democracy, New York University Film Library, 26 Washington Sq., New York 3. (33 min, BW, sd.)

This shows the kind of attitude toward people and the sense of community responsibility the child is developing as he grows toward adulthood.



TEACHING METHODS AND PUPIL ADJUSTMENT

It SHOULD be becoming more and more clear that mental health in pupils is not to be accomplished just by applying a single great and pervasive truth. Even if we ignore the child's heredity and family background, we must still take into account the physical health of the child, the kind of teachers he has, his relationships with his peers and his reactions to the school curriculum. The mental health needs of school children will never be met by giving attention to only one of such factors as are mentioned above. It was emphasized in a previous chapter that one of the more important factors in the mental health of pupils is the mental health of the teacher. The methods of teaching employed count as another factor high in importance.

The writer would like to accept the thesis proposed by William H. Burton that a common misconception of learning is that "The outcomes of learning are thought to be simple instead of complex; single instead of numerous and varied."¹ That is to say, children learn not only reading, writing, arithmetic, geometry, chemistry, and history; but they are, at the same time, learning certain attitudes, interests, habits, ideals, and ambitions. While he is imparting the mechanical skills of reading, the teacher of reading inevitably implants a like or dislike for reading, an interest in or a distaste for books, as well as a sense of adventure or of boredom in connection with books. The arithmetic teacher may engender a liking and respect for computation or a fear of situations that involve mathematics. The science teacher is, whether he wishes to or not, helping to develop an attitude toward experimentation and research and either a respect for accuracy or a disdain for detail. At the same time that a teacher is revealing "life in ancient Rome," he is fostering attitudes of citizenship and feelings toward people of other nationalities. Moreover, these side learnings are often much more important than the

¹ William H. Burton, *The Guidance of Learning Activities*, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1944, p. 37. By permission of the publisher.

isolated facts the pupil may be able to turn back to the teacher at the time of the final examination. This statement is not necessarily an endorsement of what is vaguely called "progressive education" (and, emphatically, it is not a repudiation of progressivism). It is merely a way of presenting a fact about learning—one that effective teachers, whether the



What are the teaching advantages of enlisting the aid of pupils? Is group learning as effective as that which comes from the completion of required readings? How can each pupil be encouraged to contribute?

emphasis is on subject matter or on pupil adjustment, must inevitably take into account.

Since learnings are complex, varied, and multiple, no one method can be said to be the most effective. Just as there is no single great and pervasive truth that will lead to mental health, there is no eternally successful teaching method that will inevitably lead to success. Certain emphases based on sound knowledge of the characteristics and needs of children will tend to make successful whatever techniques a given teacher may use. Among these emphases might be listed the following:

1. The necessity for treating different children differently.

2. The importance of gaining knowledge—as a source of personal satisfaction and as the basis for continued learning.
3. The role of pupil activity (both physical and mental) in economic learning.
4. The greater vitality of learning activities which are meaningful and purposeful.
5. Joyful living today as preparation for abundant living tomorrow.
6. The value of cooperative learning activities as preparation for effective citizenship in a democratic society.

These emphases are stressed in the various sections of this chapter. No attempt is made to isolate a particular emphasis, because learnings are complex, varied, and multiple.

GIVING ANSWERS VERSUS SEEKING ANSWERS

The Teacher's "Complex." There are many books devoted to an explanation of effective methods of teaching, so it seems presumptuous to undertake to treat the subject in a single chapter. However, some matters have so intimate a bearing on the mental health of school children that attention to them is warranted. One of these is the "complex," which many teachers seem to have, that every question raised in class must be answered. To make it even more difficult, a teacher often feels that the answers must be phrased in the exact words that he had in mind when the question was asked. The hazards to the child are twofold: first, he is discouraged from seeking answers on his own initiative because he knows that, finally, the answer will be given by the teacher and in his own words; and, second, the pupil acquires the erroneous notion that there is an answer to every problem. Wendell Johnson states the difficulty as follows:

Human energy is never more extravagantly wasted than in the persistent effort to answer conclusively questions that are vague and meaningless. Probably the most impressive indictment that can be made of our educational system is that it provides the student with answers, but it is poorly designed to provide him with skill in the asking of questions that are effectively directive of inquiry and evaluation. It teaches the student to "make up his mind," ready or not, but it does not teach him how to change it effectively. Any attempt to improve our educational system that does not involve a clear recognition of this defect of it can hardly be expected to lead to substantial reform. In fact, any attempt to reeducate a maladjusted individual that does not leave him with effective techniques of inquiry cannot be trusted to result in substantial and lasting benefits.²

² Wendell Johnson, *People in Quandaries*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946, p. 55. By permission of the publisher.

It is a matter of singular importance that young people should learn either that answers are not known in full or that, if they are known in part, they are not final. There are already too many people who depend on authority and the expert for answers. These people illustrate the need for instilling the attitude that the individual must assume responsibility for finding answers, even though they be tentative answers. In no other way can they expect to meet the many complex and changing problems that they must face in a fast-moving world. Raising questions which do not get answered will help prepare the child to acquire the ability to adjust to the many problems he does not meet in school. He will have a better chance to acquire the ability to do research and be prepared for the inevitable time when he will discover that there are conflicting answers to the same problem. A teacher can do much that may destroy an individual's ability to change his mind by not allowing him the privilege of challenging her view. This tendency is, of course, not characteristic of all teachers, but it is true of some of them. Perhaps the teacher is unaware of his inclination to give answers, but it is nevertheless a wrong habit, against which all teachers should guard.

Miss M., a teacher of the social studies in high school, serves as an example. She has definite ideas about the undesirability of what is currently being called the "welfare state." Students know that if they argue against her views they will be given low marks. Her reputation is so well established that some of the more adventurous students deliberately set out to bait her. They look up arguments, just for the fun of presenting them. But they know what the result will be, so after the first six weeks or the middle of the semester, they pretend to be converted and meekly nod their heads when she presents her views.

A high-school boy recently related that he found it advantageous not to speak up at all in class, because he wanted to present the views he heard at home (the father and mother were both in the profession of teaching and were highly respected); but because the views differed from those of his teacher, he kept quiet. On the first attempts at the presentation of conflicting views, the instructor became so angry that his face reddened and he shouted angrily at the lad.

Not only is such dogmatism a negative influence on the mental health of the child, but it is indicative of a closed mind on the part of the teacher. Knowing all the answers and refusing the right to question is, besides, not in accord with our ideals of democracy. It would be desirable from the standpoint of mental health, as well as of effective teaching techniques, if the teacher were to be a learner with the students. It would serve to launch them upon a cooperative search for information which could result in the thrill of discovery and provide a basis for the continued growth which is so fundamental to true mental health.

An eighth-grade teacher relates how she discovered the working of this principle. There was in her class a gifted girl—at least, the tests indicated she was such—who was apathetic in her work. She was not sullen but gave answers curtly and with no apparent interest. By and large, her participation was halfhearted. One day she came to the teacher with some question on the solar system that was not answered in the books they were using. She was more animated than the teacher had ever seen her before, and the teacher was highly pleased to be able to give her the answer, thinking that she had finally found a facet of interest. But the girl merely thanked her and returned to her desk, to idle away more time. A few days later, the girl asked another question, which the teacher was unable to answer, but she suggested some references and clues and told the girl she herself would like to know what the answer was. The girl set to work heartily, later gave a complete discourse on the problem, and then was encouraged to present her findings to the class. The next day, the girl came with another question, which the teacher could answer—but did not. Again there was a spirited search for information. The teacher then tried the same technique with others of her pupils and found that, with varying degrees of assistance in developing techniques for finding information, these pupils showed much the same response.

THE ROLE OF INTEREST

Interest is intimately related to the concept of purposefulness. In general, whatever is done to stimulate pupil interest will also add to the pupil's comprehension of purpose. Hence, this section is in reality an extension of the preceding discussion of purpose.

Meaning and Importance of Interest. Interest may be defined as the spirit which exists between the individual and some object, situation, person, or activity. The "spirit" is a feeling of oneness with, or a matter of identification. Interest is a pleasant-feeling tone on the part of the pupil, which is aroused by the situation or the person toward which mental or physical energy is directed. It should be noted that interest is not a discovery but rather something that is created. Pupils are naturally interested in very few things; they create their interests by growth, maturation, and experience or contact. Interest is an active feeling on the part of the pupil. Teachers cannot *make* things interesting. Rather, they can set up the conditions whereby the pupil is encouraged or enabled to *take* an interest.

Interest is a key concept in contemporary education. It is another of those matters which we may guardedly refer to as being most important. Many of the problems of teachers would be diminished (discipline, rapid learning, vigorous application, fostering of independence) if those teachers were to become acquainted with and utilize the conditions which lead

to the creation of interest. But perhaps the strongest statement that can be made with reference to the importance of interest has to do with the importance of developing a favorable attitude toward learning beyond the days of formal schooling. If we, as teachers, can help pupils develop genuine interests, we shall have accomplished that all-important goal of getting pupils to regard learning and education as a lifelong process. F. E. Bolton states this significant objective as follows:

On graduation from high school, what a boy loves is vastly more important than what he knows. What companions does he choose? What books does he voluntarily read? What ideals does he harbor? These are the really significant characteristics which determine his life's career. Does he chum with wholesome pals, does he read choice literature, does he enjoy good lectures, does he participate in harmless recreation, does he take an interest in civic welfare? Or, does he seek vile companions who tell smutty stories and enter into questionable escapades, does he read trashy and indecent magazines and books, does he sneer at the church, the school, good books and all serious activities?

His attitude toward society and its problems, his attitude toward religion and morals, his attitude toward duties and obligations, are vastly more important than the few items of intellectual knowledge he has gained. His spontaneous likes and dislikes, his loves and his hates, his longings and aversions, will really determine what manner of man he shall be.³

The fact that these words were written some twenty years ago does not detract from their importance. Rather, our slowness in accepting them would seem to indicate a need for a more careful study of the doctrine which is proposed in them.

Techniques for Stimulating the Growth of Interest. The following proposals for stimulating interest are explained briefly because the writer wishes to avoid creating the impression that the suggestions are either conclusive or inclusive. It is hoped that the reader will expand each concept to fit the particular situation at hand.

1. Provide a worthy example. Interest is one form of emotion. Emotions are contagious. The teacher should, therefore, serve as an enthusiastic and confident example of the love for learning. The enthusiasms of the teacher are generally quickly accepted by pupils of all ages. The bored and weary teacher begets an apathetic pupil. The eager and vital teacher fosters similar behavior in pupils.

2. Make sure the pupil understands what is expected of him. Young children playing with complicated mechanical toys which they are unable to operate quickly become bored. Simple blocks and balls which

³ F. E. Bolton, *Adolescent Education*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931, p. 175. By permission of the author.

they can manipulate will engage them for longer periods. Adults may be interested in lectures they can understand but would be restless if made to sit through a presentation in a language they did not understand. Certainly one of the major advances in educational practice is the increasing attempt to realize what things do and do not have meaning for pupils and to govern the choice of curriculums accordingly.

3. Provide an immediate and clear goal. Only the psychologically mature person can sustain prolonged effort directed toward remote goals. The younger the pupil, the more necessary it is to have immediate objectives. To have something to work toward and to know the possibility of attaining it in a short time are essential for creating and maintaining interest.

4. Relate the new to what is already known. Interests do not come out of the blue. It is natural for us to be more concerned about the welfare of our children and our next-door neighbor than about some unknown person in Tibet. If you had never seen a bird, you would not be interested in ornithology; but if you had studied birds, knew their habits, could classify them, and had a feeding station, you would become increasingly interested. We cannot expect children to be interested in abstractions when there is so much that can be done to expand their knowledge of things about which they are already partially informed.

5. See that information is acquired. One who cannot read is not interested in reading. One who cannot compute is not interested in arithmetic. One who knows no history is not interested in our national beginnings. It follows that interest is contingent upon the acquisition of information. Sometimes this acquisition involves drill and some forcing. But if drill is used with variation, and if compulsion is used with discretion, the result is likely to be favorable to success. New knowledges serve as a basis for expansion of interests.

6. Arrange for success. There is truth in the cliché, "Nothing succeeds like success." Arranging for success involves a knowledge of the capacities of individual pupils. It involves a comprehension of the difficulty of the task. It involves the provision of varied activities. And it is affected by the relative nearness or remoteness of goals, because success is an individual matter. All this might be summarized by saying that success is dependent upon the setting up of appropriate goals.

7. Scale activities to capacities. Success cannot be achieved in activities that are not scaled to the capacity of the individual. Two examples may serve to illustrate the point. Among the factors involved in reading readiness is a mental age of approximately 6.5 years. If we try to force reading before this minimum age, the result is embarrassment, humiliation, boredom, and the creation of feelings of inferiority. It has been noted that a greater proportion of high-school pupils are successful in

the study of algebra when algebra is studied in the junior or senior year rather than the freshman year (I.Q.'s being the same). Mental capacity is greater with the additional years, even though the I.Q. remains the same. Unfortunately, we do not have precise and definite statements as to the optimum time for beginning most of the other school subjects. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the teacher to look for symptoms indicating that the teaching is approaching too near the frustration level of the student.

8. Encourage pupils to keep up with daily assignments. It is discouraging to get behind. Success breeds success and failure breeds failure. The teacher would do well to help and encourage able students who have dropped behind because of illness or interfering activities, so that they could keep up with their peers or with the course outline. Any students who are unable to progress at the normal rate should have their assignments varied, so that they can consider their progress satisfactory in terms of what is expected of them.

9. Provide an opportunity to use what is learned. One value of recitations is that they give the pupil an opportunity to use what has been learned. A more functional use of learned material would be to have it applied to the solution of a felt problem. Thus, utilizing knowledge of civics in launching plans for a youth recreation center would be more meaningful than putting that knowledge to use in passing a test. Nevertheless, tests have their place in arousing interest. Most of us enjoy taking the tests we see in various magazines. The difference lies in the use that is made of results. If the test in school is the sole basis for the assigning of grades, it is likely to destroy rather than foster interest. More pertinent uses of knowledge might be found in making a mural, presenting a report, preparing and evaluating a field trip, working out the solution of some school problem that involves the welfare of pupils, or participating in some group project.

10. Help the students know what is being accomplished. A knowledge of results is a motivating factor. Let the pupils know how their response of today is an improvement over that of yesterday. Show children specifically how their reading is progressing, how their written compositions are improving, how their comprehension of the multiplication tables is growing, and how their knowledge of history is expanding. If this undertaking seems difficult, the teacher might well appreciate the difficulty pupils have in evaluating the slow process of growth. Examinations can be made use of at this point for the drawing of graphs or charts of the results—further, the chart has personal reference rather than the aspect of interpersonal competition. Numerous experiments in educational psychology point uniformly to the fact that those who know they are im-

proving work more effectively than those who have not been informed regarding results.

11. Utilize concrete sensory material. Verbal descriptions are difficult for children to understand and perhaps have much less meaning for high-school pupils than is commonly thought. Moreover, learnings take place through mediums other than the auditory. The vitality of learning can be increased by the use of materials that can be handled, felt, seen, even tasted. Teachers are taking advantage of concrete sensory materials when they make excursions or engage in projects, when they utilize films, phonograph records, models, stuffed animals and birds, and when they conduct experiments. All these material aids add to the possibility of arousing and sustaining interest, because they are meaningful. Then, too, if learning is best accomplished through doing, the opportunity to see, hear, and feel is conducive to a rate of learning that is, in itself, a source of motivation.

12. See that action is full and vigorous. Children like to be physically active; they enjoy being participants. In fact, it is difficult for them to remain passive and they will frequently find something to do if they are not led to constructive activity. The activity planned for them may include recitations, oral reading, spelling drills, the giving of reports, and encouragement of their asking questions; but it should also take such forms as making displays, going on trips, producing a play, painting, drawing, working with scissors and paste. These latter types should be regarded as learning activities just as surely as those in which the child has a book before him. Activity can be arranged for in the high school in much the same way—performing experiments, engaging in projects, making clothes and preparing foods, utilizing student activities (the extracurricular program) more fully, and engaging in field trips.

13. Capitalize on feelings of belongingness. Each pupil should be made to feel that he is a significant part of the group. This will require more than words, though reassuring words will unquestionably help. It means that there must be great enough variety of occupation in the classroom so there will be something significant which each child can do. Each must have a role to play. One fourth-grade teacher accomplished this by seeing that each child had some duty to perform. There was a president, a secretary, a monitor, an official greeter, a person to head the fire line, one to bring up the rear of the fire line, a flower arranger, a material distributor, a play-equipment custodian, an errand boy, a student-council member, and the like. It might be well to mention that requiring all pupils to do the same thing at the same time works toward destroying a feeling of belongingness, because of the great differences there are in the ability of different ones to do any given task. Belongingness is a

feeling that cannot be ignored if we hope to have all pupils develop an interest in classroom functions.

14. Be alert for strong emotions that interfere with desired motivation. No pupil, in elementary or high school, can efficiently concentrate on school activities if he is worried about the way his parents are getting along, about whether or not his father will have a job, about whether or not his sister will recover from her illness. While the teacher can do nothing about the worrisome situation, he can make due allowance for the situation by relaxing his demands, by being tolerant of inattention, and by giving additional encouragement. Some of the interfering strong emotions are aroused by school situations which the teacher can help to solve. These disturbing conditions may be lack of acceptance by peers, difficulty in learning certain phases of the current assignment, fear of the teacher, disappointment over not having achieved some position or honor that had been sought. Certainly, the teacher can control such expression of his own strong emotions as would have a disconcerting effect on the pupil.

15. Utilize appropriate punishment and reward. Studies of the use of punishment show that children do not resent—in fact, they appreciate in retrospect—consistent, appropriate, and deserved punishment. However, certain cautions must be observed. Care must be exercised that punishment takes the form of correction of the deed rather than expression of the teacher's own emotion. A particular act must not be excused on one day and punished on another day. The punishment must fit the deed. Deprivation of privilege will usually be sufficient. How does punishment lead to interest? It can help to build up a degree of accomplishment and conformity that will lead on to more effective learning and hence to greater satisfaction.

Rewards are, in general, more effective than punishment as a means of motivation. Superior work, in terms of the pupil's ability, may be rewarded by the granting of some desired privilege. Honor rolls, marks, and membership in some honored group can serve as rewards, provided that they are not made the sole avenues of recognition. Rewards which are tied to social approval and personal status become the source of powerful motives for young people. It must be kept in mind, however, that rewards are not the only means of fostering the growth of interest, although, as one of many techniques, they merit attention.

16. Make use of deserved praise. Praise must be deserved if it is to be effective over a period of time. Pupils are quick to see through the subterfuge of superficial praise. Normal persons—children as well as adults—like to be given approval for their admirable behavior. "The praise or blame, encouragement, or sarcastic disapproval of a teacher affects them

far more than most teachers realize.”⁴ Each one of us, upon reflection, will probably recall that the deserved praise received from teachers gratified us very much and served to make us more vigorous in carrying out our activities.

Research studies show that praise is, in general, likely to be more effective with slow-learning pupils and, conversely, that blame or censure is more likely to stimulate bright children than it is to motivate the slower ones. This generalization does not, however, alter the conclusion that blame and censure must be utilized sparingly. It is certain that the more we build on positive emotions, the more assurance we will have that interests will develop.

The importance of the foregoing recommendations may be brought into bolder relief if we remember the words of the unknown psychologist who said, “The intellect is a mere speck afloat upon a sea of feeling.” Paying attention to the factors that lead to interest is only one way of recognizing feeling in the classroom, but it is important both to the teacher and to the pupil.

MENTAL DISCIPLINE AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

The Theory of Mental Discipline. There was a time in educational practice when emphasis was laid on the study of the practical arts that would help pupils adjust to the needs of the time. School curriculums were built on the basis of contemporary needs. But as times changed, the phenomenon which we know as “curricular lag” occurred and the curriculum became static. The society changed but the schoolwork did not keep pace. Schoolmen were hard pressed to justify the activities which were going on in the school. They found this justification in the theory of mental discipline. Briefly stated, this theory emphasized that the “faculties” of the mind were sharpened or disciplined by the effort put forth in the learning of difficult school subjects. It was thought that the brain would be made more powerful, penetrating, and resilient by engaging in strenuous exercise. Distasteful subjects were especially valuable, from this viewpoint, because they called forth more application than subjects in which the student was interested. This theory has now been largely discarded by educational psychologists. Difficult subjects still may have their place in the curriculum, but not merely because they are difficult. Educators now seek to have schoolwork based on the needs which students feel or, at the very worst, on the basis of needs which they are quite certain to feel at some later time.

It must be admitted, however, that vestiges of the theory of mental discipline still linger. Latin, for instance, was taught at one time because

⁴ Sidney L. Pressey and Francis P. Robinson, *Psychology and the New Education*, rev. ed., New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944, p. 422. By permission of the publisher.

it was valuable for those large numbers of students who were preparing for the ministry. It persisted, in spite of the fact that when a larger cross section of the population entered school there was a smaller proportion of them studying to be clergy. Today Latin is all too often taught as though the main factor were mental discipline. Teachers, and parents as well, feel that Latin is good for the student because it makes him buckle down and do some good, hard work. The writer has encountered many teachers who defend Latin on this very basis. There is no intention here of condemning Latin as an educational anachronism. The subject may serve a valuable purpose if it is thought of in terms of the needs of the student and taught in a way that corresponds to these needs. No one denies that the pupil today needs facility in the use of his mother tongue. This is a purpose uniformly stressed in lists of educational objectives. When Latin is taught so as to show the derivation of English words, when it is taught in ways which facilitate the study of modern languages, it is serving a contemporary purpose. Many teachers do accomplish this. Others seem to be content to explain the purpose of the study in terms of the general and vague good it will do the student by virtue of the mental exercise provided.

Many students have been exposed to fruitless courses in mathematics because of the mental-discipline orientation. When they asked why they should study algebra, they were given some such answer as "Because it is good for you," "Because you will need it to enter college," or "Because you will find it valuable in later life." Literature, history, economics, and the sciences have been justified in a similar tenuous fashion. But are these courses fruitless? Such vague justifications do bear fruit; but the product is not the kind desired. All too often the reaction has been a deep dislike for these subjects that leads the student to reject them, at least insofar as he has any power of choice. There are likely to be among the readers of this book those who have had to fight an antipathy for some of the subjects mentioned above because they were introduced to them by way of the theory of mental discipline.

Fortunately, there are teachers who are acquainted with the fallacy of mental discipline and who justify the teaching of all subjects, whatever they might be, in terms of the needs and purposes of their pupils. The same courses may be used as the vehicle of learning but the methods of teaching differ because the teachers are stressing the transfer values of the learning activities.

The Transfer of Learning. Any layman will admit that not all learning takes place in school. We, as teachers, know that learning is continuous. The late John Dewey insisted for many years that education is the continuous reconstruction of experience so that even better experiences may ensue. This means, among other things, that the most profitable experi-

ences in school are those which encourage and make more effective later learning experiences. Knowledge and application of the phenomenon of transfer of learning will open the way to providing a kind of education that will lay the groundwork for later profitable learnings.

By the transfer of learning is meant that learning one thing will make it easier to learn another thing; or, learning subject *A* will make easier the learning of subject *B*. Thus, the learning of Latin may facilitate the learning of English. However, transfer does not necessarily take place automatically. Even if some transfer does take place without conscious attention, there will be more transfer when certain conditions are observed in instruction. These conditions can be better understood when the conditions under which maximum transfer takes place are known; namely, (1) when there are common elements in the two learning situations, (2) when generalizations are derived, (3) when the learning is raised to the level of ideals, and (4) when the level of intelligence is high.

If teachers use these conditions wisely, they can add vitality to the pupil's learning activities and make them function better.

1. Common elements in various learning situations should be pointed out to the student. It will pay to start with having students indicate what they perceive to be the similarities and duplications among different subjects and situations. Illustrations which show the common factors can be cited. Examples of pervasive elements should be given.

2. There must be specific emphasis on principles and generalizations. These should not be left to chance or depend upon the pupil's own insight for perceiving them. The general principles should be shown in many different situations, so that the student may learn them thoroughly. Let the student know that you consider the generalization to be important and stress it in reviews, drills, and examinations.

3. Whenever possible, indicate the presence of an ideal (actually, a form of generalization) which is common to various learning situations. Thus, while you are stressing neatness on a spelling or an arithmetic paper, indicate that it is desirable to apply this same ideal to care of the school grounds and the classroom floor. Just as it is desirable to be prompt with the handing in of assignments, it is important to arrive at school on time; and promptness is a quality which employers prize in employees who wish to advance. Diligent application to the task at hand is as important in committee work, the school play, the daily assignment, chores at home, as it is in playing a good game of baseball.

4. Do not be afraid to abandon a course of study or a project if it appears to be beyond the level of the students' abilities to grasp. It may not be possible to increase the intellectual level of pupils, but it is possible to recognize the differences which exist and to expect a great deal

of some and comparatively little of others. The task itself may not prove too difficult if the pace is slackened. We know that not every lad can run the hundred-yard dash in ten seconds, but we often act as though there were no similar differences in intellectual speed.

Mental Discipline, Transfer, and Mental Health. The theory of mental discipline works against mental health for several reasons. For many students the futile and difficult subjects establish a distaste for schooling which persists beyond the rigors of the present situation. Any experienced teacher can point out examples of pupils whose interest in school activity has been thoroughly dulled by their lack of ability in dealing with numbers, with algebra, with Latin, or even with literature. The value of the mental-discipline theory may be questioned even for those who have done the work well and have received an A grade. They have learned a docility and a pattern of conformity that may be particularly blameworthy because their potentiality is relatively great. They have studied the subject as an end in itself, rather than as a means to acquiring skills and attitudes which will bring about later productive experiences.

Dependence on the theory of the transfer of learning, on the other hand, gives education an ongoing purposefulness. The student learns the functional value of the activity in which he is engaging. He has an opportunity to see how his learning fits into the pattern of his daily living. Since the teacher is not stressing the disciplinary value of the subject, he will seek to create conditions which will awaken a lively and continuing interest in the work at hand. This will encourage the student to participate more heartily and will establish not only an attitude favorable toward continuing but also a firmer basis on which to build continuity. The teacher will be interested in both the direct and the indirect values of the subject he is teaching and the student will be better able to see both kinds of values—in short, the work will touch a larger part of his entire life. All these advantages will combine to make learning more facile and to present an opportunity for the operation of the “law of effect.” The student’s feeling of gratification will stimulate him to continued educational activity. If all teachers were to accept the transfer viewpoint, it should be possible to produce a generation of children who would learn, *and live*, the idea that education is not a product but a process—a way of living. Such a realization is assuredly one of the attributes of good mental health.

Emphasis on the theory of transfer of learning is not a single or an isolated method of teaching. It can be used with all methods—whether we call them traditional or progressive methods or just teaching. This emphasis implies that an effort will be made on the part of the teacher to show the elements that are common to various subjects, to school subjects and daily living, and to the activities which go on in the school

and those which are taking place in world affairs. There must be an attempt to formulate from the activities at hand generalizations that will include situations likely to be met in the future. The emphasis implies, further, that the attitudes governing the conduct of school activities will be expanded to include more pervasive ideals. Finally, it implies that schoolwork at all levels will be appropriate to the maturational level of the students in any particular class or grade; *i.e.*, that it will be meaningful and understandable to the individuals (not just the age group) concerned.

TEACHING METHOD AND PURPOSEFUL BEHAVIOR

The kinds of teaching methods that will be conducive to better mental health must be based on sound educational psychology. There are, of course, many aspects of such psychology, so it is necessary to single out some of these aspects and bring them into bold relief. One of them, which is currently being stressed, is that all behavior is either purposive or purposeful; *i.e.*, that activity has a goal-seeking nature. Teaching methods which recognize this principle will generally be superior to those which fail to recognize the factor of purpose.

The Meaning of Purposeful. The meaning of purposeful can perhaps be clarified by contrasting it with purposive. Purposive behaviors are those which seek to maintain the equilibrium of the organism and are largely unconscious. The attempt to understand children in terms of their biological and physiological functioning is also an attempt to understand their purposive strivings. Purposeful behavior, on the other hand, is concerned with activities which are directed toward consciously formulated goals; it is a matter of conscious concern and effort. Both kinds of behavior are goal seeking, but purposeful behavior is controlled by a relatively clearer perception of the goal.

The importance of this concept hinges on the fact that progress is more rapid and steady when there is a clear perception of the goal.

Since all motives and drives, whether conscious or unconscious, are purposive in the sense that they are headed toward a definite objective, a realizable goal, it follows that the more clearly one perceives the goal or objective, the more strongly he is motivated. Any technique, therefore, which aids the student to perceive the end from the beginning and to keep his gaze focused on the end result will be a net gain in the learning process.⁵

Recognition of the importance of making school activities increasingly purposeful is seen in those methods which emphasize such means

⁵ Reprinted by permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc., from *Educational Psychology*, rev. ed., by Charles E. Skinner, ed., copyright 1936, 1945, by Prentice-Hall, Inc., p. 204.

as the following: school projects growing out of incidents in the pupils' lives; clarity of explanation by the teacher—in terms the pupils understand; youngsters carrying on activities because the activity itself is enjoyed—not because a grade or reward will be earned; relating schoolwork to the adolescent's vocational ambitions; connecting schoolwork to topics which are being discussed by students in their free time; and applying schoolwork to the solving of some problem which the group has accepted as its own. It should be clear that purpose is not inherent in the task or subject at hand, but rather that it is a part of the pupil's way of looking at the activity. Behavior is purposeful when the student accepts the task as his own. Thus, understanding and acceptance are the keys to increasing the purposefulness of pupil behavior.

Purpose and the Elementary-school Child. A characteristic of the elementary-school child is that his span of attention is relatively shorter than that of the adolescent or the adult. There will be some variation from individual to individual and from one grade to another, but it is safe to say that recognizing this relatively short span of attention makes it necessary for goals to be more immediate in the grades than in high school. The production of a play after the effort of sustained practice, the meaning of a six-week grading period, passing, or graduation—these are less likely to spur the elementary student to effort than they would the typical high-school pupil.

The immediate goal holds a lure that appeals to all of us, but that it should be immediate is particularly important to the younger child. Goals should represent something beyond one's present status or accomplishment, but they should not be so far beyond that their attractiveness is diminished by distance. This limitation is important.

With a young child the reward, if it is to have any value, must be immediate. It is futile to hold out before the young child the goal of being a bank president as an incentive for studying the multiplication table, or of having a home in heaven as an incentive for being good. He must have immediate rewards.

As he gets older he may be induced to put off gratification for longer and longer periods until he gets to the place where he will work for years for some objective. The balanced individual acquires a proportion between his desire for immediate rewards and his willingness to wait for them.⁶

Thus, preparation for a visit to the dairy tomorrow, arranging a display for P.T.A. next Friday, planning an informal drama for this afternoon, or making something to take to mother after school are ways of paying attention to the immediacy of children's goals. Longer term pro-

⁶ John J. B. Morgan, *Child Psychology*, 3d ed., New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1942, p. 234. By permission of the publisher, Rinehart & Company, Inc.

jects may be used successfully if intermediate steps are clearly perceptible to the child. A mural begun in early October in anticipation of Halloween could be a long-term goal, because the intermediate phases of its making are concrete and visible. On the other hand, repetitious practice on a dramatic production might prove boring because progress is less tangible.

Some authorities inveigh against the use of grades, marks, and stars because they are artificial and tend toward causing the pupils to lose sight of the real goals of learning. It is true that one must guard against the making of grades and the earning of rewards becoming the end purpose of learning, but these devices do possess the advantage of being immediate goals. A tenable position might be to think of marks as indicators of individual progress, while at the same time making conscious efforts to help the pupil see that they are not the end and aim of education. The pragmatic evidence is that marks are a source of motivation to pupils and there seems to be little justification for categorically condemning them because they are unwisely used by some teachers.

One of the arguments against grading is that certain children, because of their inferior capacity, are always recipients of poor marks, with consequent development of inferiority feelings. However, the way to alleviate this situation is to provide a more extensively differentiated curriculum than is now generally in existence; the mere abolition of grading will not assure such a change. . . . It is possible that a child who makes low marks in arithmetic, spelling, and other subjects but who is still permitted to have a feeling of worth as a person may not develop inferiority. . . . A more highly differentiated curriculum and a different attitude toward pupil performance on the part of teachers would contribute much toward obviating the possible bad features of grading.⁷

If recognition of superior accomplishment, in the form of marks, stars, and rolls of merit, is based on distinction along other lines, such as citizenship, neatness, playground leadership, and the bringing of supplementary materials, as well as on academic achievement, much of the criticism will disappear. At the same time, the advantage of having an immediate goal will add meaning to school activities for the elementary pupil. Certainly, such recognitions will be more fruitful than vague generalizations about becoming good adult citizens, attaining later vocational efficiency, and forming good habits that will be fruitful in later life.

Play, for the child, is a natural and serious activity. For him play is certainly purposive and, under guidance, it can become increasingly purposeful. It is an activity containing potentialities which the effective

⁷ Harvey A. Peterson, *Educational Psychology*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948, pp. 494-495. By permission of the publisher.

teacher cannot afford to overlook. In play children can see meaning that is all too frequently lacking in some of the typical school tasks which they are asked to perform. If we wish to capitalize upon the natural growth tendencies of children, we shall have to recognize play as being an important, rather than a superfluous, activity for them. If we wish to clarify purposes for children, we shall have to take steps that will capitalize on the educational values of play.

A first step toward utilizing the child's natural interest in play will be for teachers to appreciate some of its positive contributions. Among these may be listed the following: (1) Play exercises the emotions of joy and excitement—it adds zest to living. (2) It is associated with abundance of energy and its healthful release—it is recreative. (3) It provides an avenue of preparation for adult living through the exercise of physical, emotional, and mental capacities. (4) It provides an escape from unpleasant and uninteresting situations, thus providing the child with inner resources to withstand situations that cannot be avoided.⁸ (5) It provides a means of compensatory activities; *i.e.*, the child is given an opportunity to develop skills that would otherwise remain unexercised. (6) It gives an opportunity for the child to exercise his powers of imagination, thus adding to his potential faculty for indulging in creative activity. An acceptance and incorporation of these factors into our educational philosophy would be in line with repudiating the concept of mental discipline. The mental-discipline theory would lead us to suspect the values of play, because play is easy and interesting and would call forth relatively little forcing. The theory of transfer would emphasize the fact that there are values in play that would carry over in a positive manner to adult activities.

Contemporary programs of mental hygiene and of education give play an important place. The elementary teacher would do well to incorporate in her plan of schoolwork such elements of play as physical activity, competition and cooperation, use of the imagination, and the manipulation of materials. This would involve the use of games and contests. It would involve a greater permissiveness in the school atmosphere and a more active role for the pupil in the determination of activities. Playing in sand can stimulate the search for printed materials. Production of dramas can consolidate the learning of historical facts. Managing a play store can demand the use of functional arithmetic and the study of what, at a higher level, would be called economics. Rhythm work and the use of dramatizations and impersonations can be of assistance to the speech-handicapped child, besides furnishing practice in verbal expression for typical pupils. Guessing games can serve a similar function in the develop-

⁸ For further explanation see Chap. 15.

ment of language skills. Drawing pictures which tell a story can foster the gathering of information and give an opportunity for expressing oneself as well.

Purpose and the Secondary-school Pupil. The greater maturity of the high-school pupil as compared with the elementary pupil does not make the role of purpose any less vital, though the need for immediate goals may be somewhat less urgent. Much of what has been said concerning purpose at the elementary level will hold to some degree for the high-school student. Certainly there can be no objection to making the schoolwork varied, pleasurable, and tangible. The balanced use of grades and honorable-mention rolls has a place. But, in addition, the adolescent has his eyes directed toward the objective of becoming an adult.

Successful teaching methods in the high school will, among other things, stress the role of schoolwork in vocational selection and preparation. Bashfulness may prevent adolescents from admitting that they are concerned about marriage and family living but, as a matter of fact, many of them will be married in from three to five years and they are concerned about it while in school. Teaching which recognizes this interest will find a receptive audience—and a more receptive audience as these topics are more commonly emphasized in school. High-school pupils are becoming more cognizant of themselves as purchasers and consumers of goods. This area of functioning, when brought into the curriculum, will serve to enliven classes in mathematics, sociology, economics, and homemaking. These young people are functionally concerned with the problem of what to do with their leisure time. This too can provide an emphasis for such courses as literature, history, language study, music, and art. They are much concerned about their relations with others—both with their peers and with adults. As they are given opportunities to study and practice social skills, they are engaged in activities which to them are purposive as well as markedly purposeful. Adolescents have considerable concern about their personal appearance. Girls are careful of their clothing and personal cleanliness, and boys are interested in the development of strength and vitality. These natural interests offer clues for making the study of physiology, biology, and health education vigorous and purposeful.⁹

Such areas of concern as the foregoing can still further cultivate effective teaching methods and capitalize on purposeful activity if the youths are made planners and doers in the classroom. Frequently the best efforts on the part of the teacher to impart purposefulness to the pupil's work are futile. If the pupils are called in on the "purposing" process by means of planning committees, they will tend to arrange for activities which are

⁹ These areas of interest are further discussed in Chap. 4.

in accord with objectives that are already operative. Apropos of the importance of pupil planning and evaluation, Rose Schneideman says:

The feeling of responsibility it arouses sets them to thinking, to talking it over, and to acting constructively. Many of the best devices and activities of a good teacher are begun as a result of a child's criticism of a cumbersome method. . . . The teacher will always be glad of the opportunity to shift the burden of the final decision to the place where it belongs—the pupils who do the work.¹⁰

Not only are the contemporary learnings of pupils made more vital, when the pupils themselves become active doers and planners, but the technique adds to the possibility of their education's being truly functional through the practice they get in the democratic processes, which are so important in our society.

Work-Study Programs and the Secondary-school Pupil. A movement which is apparently gaining momentum and one which adds greatly to the purposefulness of secondary education is that called work-study programs. The motive back of such programs is that education will be more vital when it is related to and correlated with the vocational objectives of youth who will soon be taking their place in the business and industrial world. There are many variations of the plan, but the central idea is that students work for part of the day and go to school the rest of the time. The work phase is supervised jointly by an industrial or a business representative and by a teacher (work-study coordinator) from the school. Not only are courses set up in the school which point toward the kind of work that the student is doing, but the coordinating teacher attempts to aid other teachers of the academic and traditional high-school courses to relate their subject matter to the work the student is doing. The work-experience type of program can and, under proper supervision, does provide for the following:

1. Work experience should give pupils new status as individuals.
2. Work experience should result in new understanding of the real world of work.
3. Work experience should offer opportunities for occupational orientation and vocational exploration.
4. Work experience should generate healthy attitudes toward work.
5. Work experience should engender a strong desire to learn.
6. Work experience should deepen civic insight by bringing the participant into firsthand contact with social-industrial conditions.
7. Work experience should enable pupils to judge more intelligently their own future plans.

¹⁰ Rose Schneideman, *Democratic Education in Practice*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945, p. 349. By permission of the publisher.

8. Work experience should provide opportunities for worthy students to develop abilities that will enable them to continue their education.
9. Work experience should provide needy pupils with supplementary income.
10. Work experience should identify the adolescent with the adult group.
11. Work experience should result in socially useful work.
12. Work experience should utilize the community as a laboratory for learning.¹¹

An examination of this list will reveal that the objectives are in close accord with the specific needs of adolescents (as stated in Chapter 5) and also are in harmony with many of the principles of mental hygiene. Work experience is, therefore, a method of teaching worthy of consideration in a school program which emphasizes the objective of mental health.

CAPITALIZING ON THE RESOURCES OF THE SCHOOL

Teachers as Resources. The lack of a psychologist or psychiatrist in the school does not mean that there is necessarily a lack of wisdom in dealing with children, especially for those who do not differ markedly from their peers. While it is likely to be difficult for one teacher, who may not be strongly prepared in clinical psychology, to deal effectively with all cases which come to his attention, the counsel and aid of other teachers in the school can be used to plan a constructive program. When teachers get together on a particular case and pool their wisdom and points of view, the recommendations frequently resemble the advice of experts to a remarkable degree. On several occasions, when the author has described the symptoms of a case for a group of teachers, the resulting recommendations have been commendable. If one teacher makes a proposal that is of questionable value, others are able to check the view and point out the fallacies. When a pertinent suggestion is given, it is followed by approval or germane modifications are recommended. The pooled wisdom of the group is both accurate and complete.

It is likely that there are in every school individual teachers who are particularly able in dealing with particular kinds of problems. In one school system, for example, the English teacher was specially adept at handling the problems presented by adolescent boys, the shop teacher seemed to have a particular talent for drawing out those who had artistic talent, and the mathematics teacher could handle wisely most of the routine problems that arose among the girls. In another school, the art teacher helped a number of teachers who referred to her attention chil-

¹¹ Headings reprinted by permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc., from *A Basic Text for Guidance Workers*, by Clifford E. Erickson, ed., copyright 1947 by Prentice-Hall, Inc., pp. 360-361.

dren who had various kinds of problems. She had a mental hygiene point of view and could, through her art work, get the students to express more clearly the difficulties they were experiencing. Without pressing them, she got them interested in painting and drawing and from their work was able to understand some of their tensions. After rapport was established, the youngsters would tell her more directly what was bothering them. A city truant officer said that he was sure the work of two particular teachers who took a genuine interest in pupils was responsible for the fact that very few repeaters came from the school in which those teachers worked, while other schools in the city had a noticeably high percentage of repeaters in the juvenile courts.

Group discussions of children's problems will uncover the ability of such resource persons as have been cited above. Further, these meetings will enable teachers to know better the teachers who have such gifts and interests. Even if these meetings were to result in no constructive recommendations for the pupil (and that is unlikely), they would still have great value. Dr. George S. Stevenson has said, relative to the International Congress on Mental Health, "And so the greatest value . . . may come out of the preparatory effort rather than the final assemblage. . . . The preparatory effort clarifies and expands the thinking of the participants and nourishes their growth and effectiveness at home in a way that would pay off even if the congress at the last minute were canceled."¹² It is reasonable to expect that, in a similar manner, group conferences of teachers will serve to broaden their comprehension of mental hygiene in the schools, make them more aware of needs, and suggest to them pertinent approaches to problems of their pupils.

In addition to the human resources, there are material resources which sometimes go unrecognized. Books which deal with the various kinds of interests that children might have are helpful. The musical equipment of a school can be regarded as a means of tension release for some students quite as much as it is an avenue for putting on school entertainment or as a preparation for the child's future constructive employment of leisure time. Many communities are recognizing the wisdom of making a wider use of the material equipment by providing routine after-school activities and keeping some of the facilities in service during the summertime.

It seems appropriate to mention the use of monetary resources in providing extra individual attention and an extended school program. To expect teachers to add to their present work load the activities which are implied by the above suggestions seems unfair. More teachers and more money will be required. The value of these contributions from the stand-

¹² George S. Stevenson, "Our Stake in the International Congress on Mental Health," *Survey Graphic*, Vol. 37 (July, 1948), p. 349. By permission of the publisher.

point of improved mental health must be sold to the administrator and the school's patrons. In the meantime, teachers will have to ask themselves who will do the job if they do not. They can add to their present workload the services which are needed for better mental health, receiving no added financial compensation; but the returns they will get in greater satisfaction from knowing that they are doing an essential job will make up for some of the extra responsibility.

Pupils Are Resources. Another of the resources of the school for improving mental health is that which is inherent in the uniqueness of personality in individual pupils. Teachers are taking advantage of this resource when they call on pupils to dance, sing, recite, or perform their tricks of magic. But it can go further than this. Pupils have repeatedly proved that they can intelligently solve many problems of institutional policy, as well as the personal problems they themselves are encountering. They need only to be given a chance for discussion and evaluation.

H. E. Bullis in his book *Human Relations in the Classroom* cites numerous examples of the way youngsters in the upper grades have worked out their own problems. The technique involved was for the teacher to read to the group a hypothetical case study, which was then discussed. As the discussion progressed, the pupils shifted from the textbook case to their own problems. As one pupil revealed his difficulties, others in the class made suggestions as to what he might have done or should do in the future. This approach has the double advantage of helping students realize that others have problems and of their getting the suggestions from their peers rather than from adults.

Evelyn Millis Duvall recommends that youth approach their problems of social and sexual adjustment through group discussion and she stresses the utilization of the resources at hand.

Young people learn a great deal from discussion of their common problems with each other and with cooperative adults. Classes in family relationships, boy-girl relations, preparation for marriage, and effective living are offered in thousands of high schools and in hundreds of colleges. Y.M.C.A.'s, Y.W.C.A.'s, churches, and other young peoples' organizations provide a wide variety of informal educational and recreational opportunities. These can be started by the demand of youth as well as by intelligent adults. . . . It is up to youth as well as the leaders who work with them to tap the resources at hand.

Forums, panel discussions, and group counseling procedures are promising methods in this field.¹³

¹³ Evelyn Millis Duvall, *Keeping Up with Teen-agers*, Public Affairs Pamphlet 127, New York: Public Affairs Committee, Inc., 1947, pp. 27-29. By permission of the publisher.

It is apparent that pupils can be used as school resources. Bringing them in on planning, encouraging them to seek materials, and opening opportunities to them for the exchange of ideas are ways of utilizing this resource. The unique talents, interests, and experiences of pupils can also be used as resources to supplement ordinary classroom recitations and projects. Many teachers make use of these resources, and others should seek avenues for such utilization. Military leaders in World War II frequently reiterated that, although the United States is richly endowed with mineral, agricultural, and forest products and has a sound economy and efficient business and industrial organization, our greatest resource consists of the youth of our land. Pliable, eager, talented young men and women are the real keys to our military success. It would seem that teachers might capitalize on the realization of this fact and attempt to do an even better job of developing our richest asset—human resources.

SUMMARY

Many influences, such as family background, preschool experiences, hereditary potential, and social and civic factors, shape the mental health of pupils. When they enter school, other influences come to be felt. The teacher's personality is of great import, but so too are the kinds of methods he uses. It would be futile and fallacious to recommend a method. Various methods in diverse situations and in the hands of different teachers can be commended from the mental health point of view. There are, however, certain emphases which can be endorsed and which are applicable in many circumstances.

Teachers need to guard against the tendency to answer questions. There are several justifications for this recommendation. (1) Learning is doing, and the active seeking of answers will be more profitable to the pupil than a verbalized answer that *seems* to satisfy. (2) Answers are not likely to hold, in all situations and at all times. The habit of independence should, therefore, be encouraged. (3) There is a joy in personal discovery, of which the pupil should not be denied. (4) Continuous seeking of information should be an objective of education for democratic living.

Interest is a key concept in any education. It can be stimulated by such means as understanding, clarity of goals, increased knowledge, experiencing success, keeping up with what is expected, and using information that has been acquired. Personal motives, such as feelings of belongingness, guarding against strong interfering emotions, feelings of accomplishment, and satisfaction from praise and reward, tend to create and expand interests. Not the least of the factors for fostering interest is that the teacher himself must be enthusiastic, cheerful, and confident of the growth of his pupils.

Whatever technique the teacher uses should capitalize on the transfer value of schoolwork. This can be accomplished by pointing out the common elements in related situations, by evolving generalizations, by stressing pervasive ideals, and by seeing to it that teaching is at the understanding level of the student.

All behavior is either purposive or purposeful. The teacher should attempt to increase the purposefulness of schoolwork by making goals clear, desirable, and attainable; by utilizing grades, examinations, and rewards as means to an end rather than as ends per se. This will involve, at the elementary level, capitalizing on the youngster's proclivity for play and, at the secondary level, capitalizing on the family and vocational interest of young people.

A method that can well supplement other educational approaches is that of utilizing the existing resources of the school. These resources include the varied interests and abilities of teachers, the different divisions of the school (shop, music room, library, art room, home-economics laboratory, etc.), and above all, the resources which inhere in the uniqueness of individual pupils.

Traditional methods of teaching have their values. Newer methods can make many contributions. The major problem of method for the teacher is to recognize the inherent advantages of the particular techniques he uses and to capitalize on them for improving the mental health of pupils.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Can the matter of teaching method be distinguished from the personality of the teacher?
2. Why is the matter of "pupil activity" such a pervasive element of successful teaching methods?
3. How far can the teacher go in withholding answers? How much responsibility for finding answers should be placed on pupils?
4. Should the teacher let the students know that he has convictions about certain problems? Should he try to get students to accept his views?
5. Are the steps for eliciting interest that are cited in the chapter in keeping with the view that interest is a matter of personal purposefulness?
6. Cite some areas in which the idea of mental discipline seems to be effective. Could these advantages be attributed to the transfer of learning?
7. How might one utilize grades and marks without falling into the danger of making them ends in and of themselves?
8. How do the purposes of elementary pupils differ from the typical purposes of high-school pupils?
9. What would be the chances for instituting a work-study program in your own community?
10. Make a list of the resources in your school for improving teaching methods. Compare your list with that of other class members and see if your list should be extended.

11. Which of your pupils (or present classmates) could be used as resource people in something you are currently teaching?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

HOPPOCK, ROBERT, *Group Guidance*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949. 390 pp.

This is an easy-to-read and practical discussion of procedures to help students solve personal, academic, and vocational problems. It is designed to give the classroom worker specific help in understanding and helping students solve their common difficulties.

JENKINS, GLADYS G., HELEN SHACTER, and WILLIAM W. BAUER, *These Are Your Children*, Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1949. 192 pp.

Almost half the book consists of photographs which show youngsters in action. The authors emphasize the extent and nature of individual differences, the fact that growth is continuous, and that the first few years are of prime importance. Characteristics of different "levels" of development lay the foundation for the devising of a constructive program.

MURSELL, JAMES L., *Successful Teaching*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1946. 338 pp.

What is successful teaching? The author believes that the answer can be found only in what is known about the psychology of learning. This book is his answer to the question in terms of established psychological principles. His answers are fair and tolerant rather than categorical. Teachers will find many practical applications.

WEBER, JULIA, *My Country School Diary*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946. 270 pp.

"Purpose is at the heart of a wholesome learning experience" states the author on page 162; but she does not wait until reaching that page to show how purpose can work to make education effective. What Julia Weber did with thirty-five to forty youngsters in eight grades is a challenge to all teachers. It is enjoyable reading but contains so many ideas that reflection is in order.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Broader Concept of Method, Part I, Developing Pupil Interest, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42nd St., New York 36. (13 min, BW, sd.)

(This film is listed for the next chapter, also.) A contrast is drawn between formal recitation and informal group discussion, in which pupils, under guidance, share in planning their work and are consequently more closely identified with it.

Broader Concept of Method, Part II, Teachers and Pupils Planning and Working Together, McGraw-Hill. (19 min, BW, sd.)

Excellent for showing how high-school pupils can formulate and execute a school or community project. Difficulties are lessened by the tactful help and guidance of the teacher.

Children Learning by Experience, United World Films, Inc., 1445 Park Ave., New York 29. (32 min, BW, sd.)

Shows children playing and working together in natural surroundings. Sequences are devoted to the urge to learn, practicing simple skills, understanding the world about them, learning at second hand, and learning through play and imagination.

We Plan Together, Teachers College, Columbia University, Bureau of Publications, 525 West 120th St., New York 27. (20 min, BW, sd.)

The methods used in a core class can result in teachers and pupils working co-operatively to produce more effective learning situations.

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SOME QUESTIONABLE SCHOOL PRACTICES

ONE OF the reasons for the urgency of the study of mental hygiene in the classroom is the existence of certain practices, some of them quite widely spread, which are inimical to the mental health of school children. These practices, in spite of their being well intentioned, have been mildly criticized by some mental hygienists and vehemently condemned by others, but they continue to exist. They continue to exist because teachers have been subjected to the practices in their own schooling and have received professional instruction in the use of them. But like some of the institutions which exist in society (for instance, the traditional ways of dealing with juvenile delinquents and criminals is being questioned), these practices endure because the role of habit in behavior is strong, rather than because they are justified in terms of understanding human behavior. Certain of these questionable practices will be examined in this chapter, in order that teachers may add their weight to a critical examination of them and then, if it seems warranted, make some effort to eliminate the procedures.

SUBJECT MATTER SET OUT TO BE LEARNED

The Fragmentation of Learning. There is no doubt that there are common knowledges which should be the property of every educated individual; but the plan of gaining these out of a set curriculum or prescribed text or course of study is questionable. It has the tendency to make these learnings isolated and remote from the life situations in which the knowledges could be meaningfully used. The subject matter takes on an element of artificiality because it is not related to the out-of-school experiences of the students. Learning subject matter from this detached point of view yields a collection of mere verbalisms, rather than changed, functional behavior. In many instances, the lack of understandable purposefulness in this approach has contributed to a lack of interest and respect for education on the part of the student.

The origins of this kind of education are to be found not only in the approach that was characteristic of early education in the colonies, but also in the European practices upon which our early education was modeled. Historians of education indicate that, in its day, this approach was successful in furnishing the background that was needed for scholarly pursuits in religion, law, medicine, and, to an extent, in teaching. To a degree, it was successful. But if we stop to consider that possibly there were large numbers who were shut out from the pursuit of formal education by the selective process that was continually going on, we may begin to doubt that it was ever very highly successful. Students with talents that were equally high but that differed from the academic were given no opportunity to develop their potentialities. Today, when children up to fourteen, sixteen, and eighteen years of age in various states are compelled to go to school, the uniform curriculum must be given grave consideration.

Fallacious Justification of the Subject-matter Approach. Unfortunately, those who are in a position to do effective work in bringing about changes in practice can look back on this kind of education and say, "Well, I went to that kind of school, and look at me." Such critics fail utterly to understand that they were fortunate enough to have had the abilities and experiences which made it possible for them to overcome the handicaps imposed on them by the restricted approach. The evidence on the other side, that this education is ineffective, is clear to those who are personally less prejudiced. There are many students who rationalize their absence from school by saying that they have not the money, that they are needed at home, or that they live too far from school, when the real reason is that they can see no meaningful objective for their continuing in school. Other children do not even rationalize. They merely absent themselves from school and become habitual truants. Many stay in school but close their eyes, ears, and minds to any stimulation and sit dumbly waiting for the bell to ring and for the calendar to show them that vacation has finally arrived. Still others go through the motions and achieve a degree of competence in memorizing and reciting but make only slightly perceptible changes in behavior. Some, it is true, have the academic intelligence which makes it possible for them to do the schoolwork in a meaningful way and the general intelligence which will enable them to transfer their academic verbalizations into a relationship that will function in their lifework. However, this transfer is, to a large extent, made in spite of what is done in school, rather than because of it.

An Illustrative Case Study. The seriousness of the error of failing to recognize the special capacities and interests of the child has been well illustrated by a case which the author has been able to follow for a number of years. A fourth-grade boy, G., seemed to be interested only in

the clay-modeling activities of the school. All the other schoolwork was apparently unattractive by comparison. He played vigorously with other youngsters, for short periods, but soon returned to his clay. The objects he modeled were far superior to those produced by other children. His desk was always cluttered with models of horses, houses, men, deer, chickens, windmills, and the like. He once made a complete model of a farm, including house, barn, silo, livestock, fowls, wagons, haystack, and other items, which he modeled after various pictures that he studied. But the teacher was mainly concerned with his lack of application to numbers and his inability to read well—pursuits in which this young fellow's efforts were very haphazard. Finally, the teacher decided that she would deprive him of the privilege of working with clay until he succeeded in his other lessons. But the motivation for these other things was weak and G. would idle away his time in fruitless dreaming. Soon G. hit upon the idea of staying away from school, and some time passed before it was discovered that there was no legitimate excuse for his absences.

His parents were deeply concerned about his truancy and threatened severe punishment if the absences were repeated. Apparently G. was more willing to submit to the penalties inflicted by his parents than he was to attend school regularly, and his truancy went unchecked. He lagged further and further behind in his subjects. He began to avoid the uncomfortable situation at home by staying away nights, sleeping in boxcars or packing crates. He got food by bumming and pilfering. As the local merchants were warned against giving him food or the opportunity to steal, his wanderings became wider. By the time he was twelve, he had traveled several hundred miles to a West-Coast city and stayed away from home for a month at a time. A year later, he had signed as a cabin boy on a freighter and had been to the Orient. All this time, his interest in modeling persisted and he usually carried about with him a piece of clay, which he would press into an amazing likeness of a pig or an elk, or into a recognizable likeness of a man's or woman's head and face.

By the time he was twenty, no one expected him to be anything but a tramp. One day, a newspaper reporter found him sitting in a Los Angeles park working with a piece of clay. The reporter was struck by the skill shown in his reproductions in clay and, in talking with him, heard an interesting story of travel and adventure, which he wrote up for a Sunday-supplement story, published together with pictures of some of the things G. had modeled just to show what he could do. Two years later, another Sunday-supplement story appeared in an Eastern newspaper, describing the showcase full of models of parts of the human organism which was being displayed in a large metropolitan technical museum. It would be gratifying to report that G.'s great talent had been discovered; but unfortunately the pattern of his life seemed to have

crystallized. G. was still at heart a wanderer, an undisciplined ne'er-do-well.

G. called on the author, one day, to renew acquaintance. He confirmed the stories that had been carried in the newspapers. But he was temporarily engaged as a mess steward on a freighter. His clothes were shabby, his speech was awkward, and his ability to write was slight. He had difficulty in writing some addresses and spelling even the names of his brothers and sisters. But his skill in modeling was still apparent. He pulled a piece of clay out of his pocket and made several interesting animals for the author's small sons.

One cannot help wondering what might have been the outcome if a teacher with the mental hygiene viewpoint had used this lad's talent as an approach to other learnings—if she had tied his interest in clay to a functional ability for using numbers and words. We might assume that school would have been valuable to him even if he had not learned to read or compute. His talent for modeling might have been expanded to creativeness in drawing, painting, and sculpturing at no great loss to the school. Certainly, he could have had the advantage of remaining in contact with his peers instead of being forced into an adult world during his childhood. We might assume, too, that the case might have turned out worse than it did. G. might have been a delinquent and an adult criminal—a liability to society—instead of becoming merely a nonentity. But the supposition most acceptable to the author is that the boy could have been led by an adroit teacher to acquire the fundamentals of learning that would have contributed to the making of an artist of no mean importance.

Changing Emphases. Some indications offer hope that the handicap of subject matter set out to be learned is becoming less of a handicap to mental health than it formerly was. In many elementary classrooms children are engaged in varied activities which have more meaning to them than does an ordinary lesson in a reading or an arithmetic textbook. Their schoolwork is oriented to some experience which they have had—a trip, a visit to a museum, an excursion in the country, or the visit of someone who is recognized as having some special knowledge of interest to the group. Practical lessons in arithmetic, reading, and language are stressed through their use in carrying out the project. Arithmetic is involved in computing transportation costs and estimating the time needed for the trip. Reading is used to give the proposed project its proper setting and to furnish fuller information on questions that are raised by the activity. A study of language is introduced in the writing of letters asking permission to make a visit or expressing gratitude for a courtesy or for supplementary information. It has an important part, too, in the writing and giving of reports on various phases of the trip and in discussing topics for further study which are suggested by the project. Such work has a

place in the first grade, where pupils dictate their own reading materials, put together out of some experience the children have had—a visit to a local rose garden, for instance. In the upper grades, the work of the class centers around a long-term project, such as the investigation of local forms of government or a study of local industrial activities. Practice in the fundamental processes is not incidental, nor is it neglected; but it is introduced in connection with concrete situations which have an orientation in the real experiences of the pupils themselves.

The thirty-school experiment has indicated that such meaningful experience as this can serve as the foundation for acquiring knowledge in the traditional high-school subjects. This study carried on over a period of eight years had many interesting results and implications, but they indicate that even the students who went to college after studying in “progressive” high schools did not suffer any marked handicap on account of their having turned aside from a subject-matter-set-out-to-be-learned type of curriculum. Specifically, the following items of comparison between traditional and progressive students are worthy of note. There were 24.7 per cent dropouts from college among the progressives, as compared with 28.2 per cent among pupils who had gone to traditional schools. The grade-point average of progressive students was .04 higher—of no significance, of course, except as indicating that they suffered no great handicap. Progressives lagged by .02 of a grade point in foreign-language study. The lack of traditional prerequisites seemed to present no real disadvantage. Seventy-five per cent of the progressives were judged by their teachers to be more competent in carrying on independent work. It is in terms of the education of the “whole child” that progressive methods showed superiority; *i.e.*, these students (now in college) listened to more speeches and music on the radio, they attended more lectures and concerts, they read more books other than textbooks, and they enjoyed more cultural pursuits. Besides, they took a more active part in campus activities, except in athletics.¹

In spite of the fact that there are no marked immediate disadvantages that can be attributed to departure from a set curriculum and that there are some ultimate advantages in the long run—advantages which are both academic and cultural—the prescribed curriculum remains in force. It takes courage on the part of teachers and administrators to deviate from time-honored practices when school patrons resort to the kind of rationalizing that points out, “I suffered through strenuous courses in Latin and Greek, and now look at me.” The fact that fewer than 20 per cent of the high-school students (in many communities less than 10 per cent) will continue on to college makes little difference.

¹ Dorothy Bromley, “Education for College or for Life?,” *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. 182 (March, 1941), pp. 407-416.

But again it can be said that there are some hopeful indications. A few schools are experimenting with larger units of curricular organization than the hour-of-math, hour-of-English, stop-with-the-bell approach. English and social studies is a frequently used combination, mathematics and science are often combined. Many teachers are willing to deviate from the locally and state-prescribed curriculums; they select the topics of study from an analysis of the interests, abilities, and background of their students. Serious effort is made to keep the topics selected timely, in the sense that they fit into the present out-of-school life of the student. Some teachers start with the prescribed text but cover it at a rate that assures some comprehension of the material studied; this means that at times they go more slowly than the regulation rate, and at times they advance beyond the prescribed course rather than mark time so that the number of school days left will come out even with the number of pages remaining.

This point of view does not require a repudiation of the value of knowledge and information; but it considers knowledge for its own sake to be a more mature concept than elementary and secondary students are, in general, capable of adopting. The value of facts and of accuracy in computation can be seen to be more pertinent when the information and the practice are attached to problems that the typical school student realizes are intimately related to himself. Furthermore, it is felt that strict stressing of the subject matter set-out-to-be-learned may leave out some of the desirable concomitants of effective education. These include a testing of values, the development of attitudes toward work, an interest in continuing education, and practice in democratic activities. The viewpoint is tersely summarized in the following words:

The new school has a different approach to the acquisition of information. There is first a conditioning period in which the child becomes acquainted with a subject. He asks questions, seeks information from many sources, and, after assembling the facts and thinking them through, arrives at the solutions of his problems. His research centers around a unit of study within his comprehension. What he learns is related to his own experience; hence, he associates new facts with those which are familiar to him. Having a desire to find an answer to a question is the first requisite of the modern school. Knowing how to proceed while enjoying the accompanying activities is the second. But the methods used and their effect upon the individual are the essential characteristics which distinguish the new school from the old. Like behavior, learning cannot be acquired by thrusting it upon the unwilling child. Mental activity must be performed by the pupil; he must be eager to do the necessary work attached to the process of acquiring knowledge instead of passively receiving it from his teacher.²

² Rose Schneideman, *Democratic Education in Practice*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945, p. 11. By permission of the publisher.

Mental health is fostered by eliminating the set-curriculum approach and by meeting some of the fundamental needs which were outlined in Chapters 2 through 5. There is an opportunity to exercise the need for independence and at the same time to satisfy the need for companionship through cooperative endeavor. The goals of education become more perceptible because they are intimately related to the life of the student. On account of the varied activities which are involved in the new approach, there is an opportunity to gain recognition in other ways than through standing first on a pencil-and-paper test. Tension-tolerance is heightened through practice in solving meaningful problems. Certainly, there is a more realistic environment in which one may fill the need for manipulation and for satisfying curiosity. But, most of all, the experience approach tends to foster genuine psychological security by teaching a pupil to stand on his own feet through full and balanced living today. Mental hygiene includes many little factors, but the removal of artificiality from the curriculum is one of the especially significant ones.

UNIFORM GRADING, EXAMINATIONS, AND MARKS

Grades Are Not a Lifelike Situation. The Procrustean-bed analogy, so often referred to in education, is most pertinent when applied to the system of grading that is so extensively used in present-day schools. The grading system would be more lifelike if every citizen were employed to do the same task at the same salary, if everyone were expected to produce the same results from their efforts. But this is not what happens in life. Employees are selected to do different jobs at different rates of pay. The day laborer is considered a success when he works regularly and efficiently, even though his salary may be only half that of a successful lawyer, professor, or doctor. Actually, all workers do not do the same thing. They tend to do the things for which they have the interest, talent, and background. They might do them even better and work more cheerfully if they did not have school backgrounds which had implanted feelings of inferiority and the anticipation of failure. Yet we expect all pupils to perform the same tasks and then we humiliate some of them by paying them a lower salary than someone else receives who may have worked even less diligently. It is easy to imagine the frustration, resentment, and disappointment that are built up by such a situation. Like the Procrustean bed of old, the present grading system does not fit all individuals, but they must be made to fit it.

In antediluvian times, while the animal kingdom was being differentiated into swimmers, climbers, runners, and fliers, there was a school started for their development. Its theory was that the best animals should be able to do one thing as well as another. If an animal had short legs and good wings, attention should be devoted to running, so as to even up the qualities as far

as possible. So the duck was kept waddling instead of swimming, and the pelican was kept wagging his short wings in the attempt to fly. The eagle was made to run and allowed to fly only for recreation, while maturing tadpoles were unmercifully geyed for being neither one thing nor another.

The animals that would not submit to such training, but persisted in developing the best gifts they had, were dishonored and humiliated in many ways. They were stigmatized as being narrow-minded specialists. No one was allowed to graduate from the school unless he could climb, swim, run, and fly at certain prescribed rates; so it happened that the time wasted by the duck in the attempt to run had so hindered him from swimming, that his swimming muscles atrophied and he was hardly able to swim at all, and in addition, he had been scolded, punished, and ill-treated in many ways so as to make his life a burden. In fact, he left school humiliated. The eagle could make no headway in climbing to the top of a tree, and although he showed he could get there just the same, the performance was counted a demerit since it had not been done according to the prescribed course of study.

An abnormal eel with large pectoral fins proved that he could run, swim, climb trees, and fly a little. He attained an average of sixty per cent in all his studies. He was made valedictorian of the class.³

When schools abandon uniform grading—and there are now hopeful trends in that direction—we shall see pupils who are gaining in confidence, feelings of worth, and personal security. They will come to realize that they have a contribution to make in the school and in life, even though it is not identical with that of their classmates who sit in adjacent seats. Schools will be more lifelike when “the salary schedule” allows each child a chance to accomplish in his unique way.

Unreliability of Grades. Not the least serious criticism of the grading system is its unreliability. Study after study has shown that two different teachers do not give the same grade for objectively determined equivalence of achievement in academic accomplishment. There is considerable difference between the grading standards of various schools. The same paper graded by different teachers may, and has, received scores running the full gamut of the grading scale. Even the same paper graded by the same teacher at different times does not always receive the same score. But the most ludicrous of these situations was that in which, during a study of grading, the teacher’s paper—a key to the scoring—was accidentally mixed in with the students’ papers and was marked as a failure by some of the scorers. The unreliability of grading should count as reason enough for regarding it as a questionable practice—to say nothing of the effect which it has on those who are at the receiving end of this unjust practice.

³ J. Adams Puffer, *Vocational Guidance*, Chicago: Rand, McNally & Company, 1913, pp. 22-23. By permission of the author.

Attempts to revise the grading system have been largely confined to improving the system itself, and making it more objective. Thus, objective tests of the true-false, multiple-choice, and matching type have been the subject of extensive study and experimentation. The aim has been to remove, as far as possible, the personal element from scoring. Resort to the use of standardized tests is more of the same thing, but based on large-scale operations. This work is commendable but whether it will really get to the roots of the problem is doubtful. For one thing, it does not remove the criticism that all students are still measured on the same scale. It does not allow for the differences which exist within the different localities of the same city. The use of standardized tests tends to stimulate teachers to teach the facts that their students will need in order to show up well on the test. Thus it fosters artificiality in the curriculum by ignoring local situations and contemporary events.

The Subjective Element in Grading. The writer is willing to hazard the guess that the elimination of the personal element in scoring will have some handicapping features. The fact is that success in any line of activity depends, to a degree, upon the ability to get along with others and to make good impressions. It is worth considering that the impression a pupil makes on his teacher is a worthy concern of education. The ability to express his ideas so that others will understand and consider them deserves some attention. What is needed, in the author's opinion, is not a repudiation of the subjective element in grading but a recognition of it that will allow the teacher to use it constructively. Prejudice certainly should be eliminated; but there may be advantages in considering the "total personality" of the child, rather than his objective achievement on an objective or a standardized test.

The teacher's viewpoint of the marking system is intimately related to his philosophy of education. If he regards education as the mastery of subject matter, if he believes the function of the school can be stated as acquisition of facts and improvement of the mind, then grades, marks, and examinations are acceptable to him. If, on the other hand, he conceives of education as the drawing out of the individual, as a means of developing the "total personality" of the pupil, then he will question uniform marks and standardized grading, because he finds them inimical to the purposes of education.

The foregoing does not state, nor does it mean, that examinations and tests have no place in the educational scheme. What it implies is that such devices are only a part, not the entire medium or the end, of educational procedures. Tests and examinations have a constructive role to play in functional education, but their use—or rather, their misuse—leads to the logical question, "What is that use?"

The concept which promises some relief from the limitations of marks and grading is called "evaluation." Evaluation is an attempt to broaden the basis for estimating the progress of a student in school. While acquisition of information is one of the elements considered, there are items combined with the evaluation which include a consideration of the pupil's background, his status at the beginning of a unit or term of work, his work habits, his attitudes, his ability to get along with others and work with them, his actual potentialities in contrast with his grade placement alone, the state of his physical health and any physical or emotional handicaps, and the like. It is, in short, an organismic viewpoint of the child, rather than a reliance upon the end result of mastering subject matter.

Steps toward Improvement. Several techniques are being used for experiments in evaluation. One minor revision is to grade accomplishment in terms of ability rather than by personal comparisons. Thus, an S (for satisfactory) may be given to one student who is doing the work in a mediocre fashion, because his ability is low, while another student who has the same accomplishment is given a U (unsatisfactory), because he has high potential, and another receives a C (commendable) for the same work, because he is working under definite and known handicaps. This system provides a workable basis for the wise use of informal and standardized examination, but it also considers the child in terms of his physical health and home background. One lad who was achieving below the median grade for his class at the end of the term was able to look at his accomplishment with satisfaction. When he was questioned by a visitor who had commented on the fact that there were others who were doing markedly better, this lad replied, "Yes, it's true that I do not stand very high in the class, but look how far I have come" and he pointed to the beginning test results of his high-ranking classmate and himself. He showed how he had progressed twenty-three points on this particular examination, while his classmate had improved only twelve points. He could justifiably receive a C (commendable) while his classmate might get an S or even a U. If someone objects that such a grade might give the wrong impression to an employer or a college-entrance board, the question may be asked, "Is not the school at least as much for the individual student as it is for prospective employers?" The mental hygiene viewpoint would favor considering the pupil first.

Other dissenters from the grading and marking viewpoint are in favor of discarding formal letter and numerical designations and substituting conferences of various sorts. One of these conference methods is the teacher-parent visitation, in which the teacher goes to the home of the parent (with the parent's consent) and talks about the pupil's progress, his limitations, areas of development needing attention, behaviors that are commendable or that need improvement, ways in which the parent might

help the school in its developmental program, and factors in behavior that have received commendable notice. The visit to the home has the additional advantage of opening to the teacher a first-hand view of what the home situation is, thus enabling him to understand better and to make allowance for some of the actions in school that otherwise might be severely condemned. Some parents seem to be somewhat embarrassed by the prospect of a visit from the teacher. In such cases, the teachers send an invitation for the parents to come to the school for a visit. While this lacks the advantage of the teacher's gaining an insight into the home life of the pupil, it has an advantage in giving the parent some firsthand information about the operation of the school.

The teacher-parent conference is particularly valuable in the primary grades. In the upper grades and the high school, the teacher-pupil conference has been given favorable comment from those who have tried it. In this, teacher and pupil talk "man-to-man" about the progress being made, habits that should be formed or broken, and areas of knowledge and behavior that need additional attention. This method has the advantage of making a student a more active participant in the evaluation than he ordinarily is when the letter or numerical grading system is used. Teacher-pupil conference methods have been tried as a modification of the letter-grade system, an attempt being made to be sure that the pupil has understood why he was graded as he was and also to clear up any possible misunderstandings. If there were no other advantages—but there are others—the opportunity it offers for better understanding between the teacher and the pupil would make further experimenting with this plan worth while.

The objective of all grading systems should desirably be to promote growth on the part of the pupil. This objective is perhaps nowhere better served than in the use of pupil self-appraisal. This plan calls for a detailed statement of the various aims, objectives, and desired outcomes of the learning situation. The aims are made clear to the students at the beginning of the term—in many places, the students have participated in the formulation of the objectives—and then each student is given the chance, periodically, to evaluate his own progress toward the attainment of the goals. In the meantime, the teacher will have evaluated the student in terms of the same objectives. If there is any discrepancy between the two evaluations, teacher and pupil get together to discover the reasons for the differences. This serves to clarify any misunderstandings and thus has the effect of making for a more wholesome classroom atmosphere.

Analysis of current educational literature clearly indicates a trend away from grades and marks to the viewpoint of evaluation. Educational texts a decade ago, in dealing with the subject, discussed means of making grades and marks more objective and precise. Now the tendency is to

broaden the base and make use of the mediums inherent in the concept of evaluation. Anecdotal records; representative bits of work; health histories; the results of periodic intelligence tests and achievement tests; reactions to the responses made on personality inventories; teacher-teacher, teacher-pupil, and teacher-parent conferences—all these become a part of the broadened concept. But educational lag is an ever-present phenomenon and it is up to classroom teachers to determine whether or not their marking practices can be changed so as to bring out improved education for "the whole child." If the teachers in the author's classes are representative of the nation's teachers, there is considerable dissatisfaction with marks based on accomplishment alone. Many have reacted to the traditional system in terms clearly implying that an aspect of mental hygiene is involved.

THE FALLACY OF NONPROMOTION

Threat of Failure Is a Negative Incentive. There are some administrators and some teachers who believe that, in order to maintain standards, a certain percentage of the pupils in a class must be failed. They argue that, if the threat of failure is removed, the pupil will have no incentive for working—the result will be to foster dilatory work habits. Mental hygienists take the view that a positive source of motivation is better stimulus than a threat of danger. Many administrators and teachers are taking the attitude that threat of failure is a questionable practice. When they hear the statement, "Two students were failed," they ask the question, "Why did they fail? What was done that should not have been done? What was left undone that should have been done?" This viewpoint clearly puts the blame where it ought to be placed. A failing student is an indication either of the teacher's inability to show clearly the purposes of education or of a failure to recognize the limitations that are due to the wide spread of individual differences.

The Federal Security Agency published a study, which indicates the trend with regard to promotions and its mental hygiene implications in the following words:

Schools have been moving away from the practices of acceleration and demotion. An increasing percentage of high schools has so enriched the curricula, provided for a thoroughgoing study of its pupil personnel, and made available skilled counseling that virtually all pupils are successful in what they undertake. Most psychologists are inclined to approve this tendency because the adjustment of pupils with a minimum of failure is considered to have the best effect on the personality structure of the individual.

Many of the pupils will learn better if the school situations are made into experiences that have meaning in life. In order to recognize their peculiar capacities and help them achieve success rather than failure, the school needs

to provide for them a wide variety of learning activities. It needs also to lessen the emphasis upon the inabilities and failures of these pupils and to accept in a forthright fashion the responsibility to provide meaningful learning experiences for all pupils, even though their interests and abilities vary considerably.⁴

Newer Practices in Promotion. Experienced teachers often question the practice—which is gaining momentum—of passing the student, even though he has not “come up to standard,” because they feel that failure is only being delayed. They feel that it is more kind to fail the student immediately than to postpone the imminent failure. They assert that the student who is socially promoted will get inflated ideas about his abilities. It is probably true that some will get such ideas, but a far greater number of them will know, without grades, marks, and failure, that their work in academic lines does not measure up to that of their peers. The teacher need only reflect on his experience to realize that large numbers of students from the first grade on have a rather clear conception of their comparative ability. Rather than to shame and humiliate large numbers of students, in order to be sure that one or two would not get inflated ideas about their academic prowess, it would seem to be a simple thing to be quite frank in a personal interview with the unseeing one or two.

Another argument against the idea of block promotion is that students who are not prepared for the work of the next class will hold that class back. Statistics show that this, too, is a misconception. Studies indicate that from 70 to 90 per cent of the pupils who are given trial promotions make good in the next grade—this, in subject-centered schools. Further, it can be argued realistically that one does not eliminate the range of individual differences between students by failing some. Wide differences will still exist. Even in the lower grades—the third, for example—a teacher who knows how to give and interpret a standardized test of reading will say that reading ability ranges from the first-grade level up to the sixth, and sometimes even higher; yet he finds no great difficulty in teaching all the youngsters. As a matter of fact, teachers of one-room schools have for decades handled a still wider range of individual differences and quite frequently have done it very effectively.

Worst of all, failure results in the pupil being branded as a failure by his schoolmates, his relatives, and his friends. Failure incurs the risk that the pupil will develop an inferiority complex and acquire a grudge against the school and society. When a pupil fails school, there is danger that he is being prepared for failure in life.⁵

⁴ David Segel, *Intellectual Abilities in the Adolescent Period*, Bulletin 6, 1948, Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, pp. 22 and 24.

⁵ Ward G. Reeder, *A First Course in Education*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 3d ed., 1950, pp. 300–301. By permission of the publisher.

A. A. Sandin made a study of 416 children, including 139 slow-learning pupils, from five elementary schools in Wallingford, Connecticut. The pupils were selected from sixteen classes from each grade level from first through eighth. He concluded that nonpromotions contributed to bring about a situation in which the differences in stature, physical maturity, and play interests built up a barrier to the achievement of satisfactory social relationships. Repeaters in many instances were cut off from association during school hours with their preferred companions, who were in higher grades. The result was a manifestation of antisocial behavior and an unsatisfactory attitude toward school, in the retarded groups.⁶

The notion that the student should be failed if he is not up to standard is intimately related to the subject-matter-set-out-to-be-learned concept. If teachers are restricted by state or local curriculums and feel that these represent a minimum of accomplishment, instead of serving as guides to teaching, then the idea of failure is hard to remove. However, some teachers have the courage to maintain the pupil point of view and will hold out for the belief that the student's going to another grade or class will be more educative than his being again subjected to the frustration of remaining in a failure situation for another semester or year. Effective pupil guidance will avert much of the prevailing practice of failing, but where mistakes are made it seems unwise to place the whole burden on the student. If conditions conducive to mental health are to prevail in our schools, the negative threat of failure must be replaced by more positive lures to educational achievement.

HOMEWORK

Doubtful Values of Homework. Closely allied to the threat of failure is the necessity for the student's doing homework in order to complete the work of his grade or class. The notion that a prescribed amount of work in a textbook or a syllabus must be done in a unit of time requires many students to do the work at home. The writer will probably argue this case with more heat than light, but it is one of the more common school practices that are unfavorable to good mental health on the part of poor, mediocre, and able students, alike.

In the first place, homework assignments are likely to magnify rather than to reduce the range of individual differences in academic achievement. The youngster who is having difficulty in keeping up with his peers is also likely to be the one whose home influences are distracting. He may have other work to do—a paper route, caring for babies, or extensive home duties. The home conditions may be crowded, so as to

⁶ A. A. Sandin, *Social and Emotional Adjustment of Regularly Promoted and Non-promoted Pupils*. Child Development Monograph 32, New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1944.

prevent privacy for study or even a place for spreading out books and papers. On the other hand, the able student is likely to have parents who are sympathetic to his pursuit of study. He probably has a room or a table for a study place, while others in the family are willing to tune down the radio out of consideration for him; and able assistance may be available. These conditions may tend to give him a feeling of superiority over his less fortunate but equally intelligent classmate.

In the second place, young people, including those of high-school age, need to have time for play and social development. School attendance should not demand of the student a monastic devotion to academic pursuits. He should be encouraged, especially during the winter months, to play and exercise in the open air. Since mental health involves the mental, physical, emotional, and social life of the individual, the mental phase should not be allowed or encouraged to take more than its fair share of time.

In the third place, homework is likely to create a poor learning situation, both in school and at home. Those who know they can do their work easily at home are likely to make little use of their study time in school, thus forming poor work habits when work should be given first place, and tending, besides, to prevent those who cannot work profitably at home from finishing their work at school. At home, proper guidance is likely to be lacking. When the parent is not able to give competent instruction, the student is likely to become confused; and even parents who are academically capable are likely to be emotionally so involved with their children that they make tense taskmasters. Most of us have had some experience with being taught by a member of the family to drive a car, play bridge, or ski. In either case, there is in many instances the danger that a negative attitude toward learning may be awakened by the guidance the pupil is given in doing his homework.

Meaningful Homework. Now that some of the heat of the argument has been dissipated, it may be admitted that there is a place for some kinds of homework. If a class—in social studies, for example—wishes to find out about adult reactions to some situation (racial attitudes, perhaps) then a discussion with the parents would serve the double purpose of gathering information and including the parents among the resources of the school. It would also offer a basis for mature conversation on an intellectual level and thus tend to promote social maturity. Some of the work involved in the solution of a problem might include activities which cannot be carried on in school—a visit to a museum to gather information for a report, a trip to the local library to get materials not available in the school library, or another trip to obtain pamphlets from the Chamber of Commerce. Such undertakings should not be assigned to all pupils, but those who have the time without interference in their home duties

should be asked to make the visits. Finally, homework done on a volunteer basis should be permissible if the teacher knows that it will not interfere with the well-rounded program of activity that a mentally healthy child should have. For example, a pupil who is known to be spending time on homework when it can be adequately done during school hours might be discouraged from pursuing the assignment further, but one who normally has social and recreational interests might be given encouragement to make a special report on a supplementary book or to dig up some information from encyclopedias or other reference volumes which would go beyond the scope of time available during school hours.

Homework and Preparation for College. Some teachers believe that unless the high-school pupil learns to work for long hours, more than those required in school, he will be inadequately prepared for college. This may be of importance to some prospective college students, but to run the risk of impairing eyesight because of inadequate lighting, curtailing physical health because of furniture ill-fitted for study, and the restriction of exercise and possibly inadequate sleep for those who are not going to college will still place homework in the questionable-practices category. Moreover, proper work habits can be instilled in short working periods as well as in longer ones. The student who has learned to make good use of his time will not, as a rule, have difficulty in adding more hours of work in college, because he will have the advantage of additional maturity and an atmosphere where study has traditionally occupied some of the evening hours. As a matter of fact, the maintenance of a balanced schedule of exercise, recreation, and work is as important in college as it is in high school, when mental health is considered. Children and young people do not learn to work well by being forced. They learn, instead, to dislike work and they repudiate it when the compulsion is gone. They do learn to work properly when the tasks are meaningful and when rapport with the supervising adults is high.

AUTHORITARIANISM

The Unhygienic Nature of Authoritarianism. The important subject of discipline and how it can be effected with mental hygiene principles in mind is dealt with more extensively in another chapter. However, authoritarianism must also be considered as one of the questionable practices handicapping the achievement and maintenance of mental health.

In many respects the pattern of American culture is fundamentally unhygienic, authoritarianism is a customary technique of responding to differences in many aspects of human relationships, and therefore the problem of making the child's environment propitious for growth is a broad cultural problem. The school can contribute to the child's growth by decreasing its authoritarianism and by permitting a greater freedom and security that will

foster the child's contribution to the social processes at his own level of ability to contribute.⁷

There are several explanations as to why authoritarianism is harmful to mental health. One is that it limits the opportunity to practice the habit of independent thought. Pupils cannot learn how to think when what they are to think is dictated to them. Another is that it obviously restricts the opportunity for independent action, which we have seen is a fundamental human need. Freedom to grow, practice in standing on one's own feet is a prime requisite to the development of healthy feelings of psychological security. Protection by authority tends to make for false feelings of security. Empirical and experimental data indicate that dictatorial procedures tend to stir up an attitude of resentment, thus inhibiting the development of harmonious relationships.⁸ As was indicated in the foregoing section on Promotions and Failures, it is sounder mental hygiene procedure to substitute the positive for the negative. In this case, the incentive of cooperative endeavor should replace the negative stimulation of domination. Finally, authoritarianism conflicts with the ideals, if not the practices, of the adult society for which we purport to be preparing school pupils.

Deviations from the Pattern of Authority. There are some encouraging deviations from the pattern of authority which so largely characterizes our society. Numerous teachers are experimenting with plans for giving students a voice in their own classroom control and government through committees, councils, and group legislation. Often this does not take the form of student government but allows the students a chance to discuss various problems of control that are related to learning situations. Student discussion of educational objectives, selection of areas to be studied, and the designation of learning responsibilities are plans that work away from imposed authority. Regardless of the technique used, the emphasis is upon the factor of meaningful student participation, with a view to diminishing external, adult control and increasing student self-direction.

Reduction of authoritarianism does not mean the removal of direction and control. It is a matter of deciding what conditions are most likely to foster the development of effective social and personal behavior. It is a question of whether docile conformity is as good for the individual and for society as would be the development of feelings of identification (this is my or our problem) and the fostering of habits of making contributions to the functioning of one's social group. "He governs best

⁷ Harold H. Anderson in P. A. Witty and C. E. Skinner (eds.), *Mental Hygiene in Modern Education*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1939, p. 181. By permission of the publisher.

⁸ See Kurt Lewin studies cited in Chap. 8, p. 187.

who governs least" can as pertinently be said of children in the school as of the political life of a people.

The mental hygiene implications of authoritarianism are clear. On the one hand, the child subjected to dominating authority may learn to conform blindly, becoming a submissive individual incapable of doing things on his own initiative. He waits for direction, permission, and approval. He may develop lasting fears of provoking the displeasure of those in authority. On the other hand, he may store up his feelings of resentment against authority, while conforming to the desires of those in power; but when he is released from the area of authority to which he has become accustomed, he repudiates all authority. This sometimes happens when young people who have been models of behavior in the home go away to college, where their social and moral behavior deviates sharply from its older pattern. Instances occur within the teaching profession itself. Teachers who in earlier life have conformed to a domineering father may live in fear of displeasing their supervisors; or they may react to the earlier influence by deliberately flouting the administrative regime. One teacher who was exceedingly dictatorial in her teaching methods, who demanded pin-drop silence and was subject to fits of temper in the classroom, is known to have been brought up strictly in an authoritarian home. She herself had been unhappy, and now she was projecting her resentment on the pupils who were unfortunate enough to be in her class.

Authoritarianism is related to oppressive discipline. The person who believes in absolute adult authority is likely to be the one who feels justified in enforcing rules and regulations by means of corporal punishment, the uniform application of penalty without regard to individuals or situations, and the use of fear as a deterrent. Even a cursory examination of the literature of mental hygiene will show that these attitudes and practices are in direct contradiction to the teachings of mental hygienists. The qualities of independence, mutual helpfulness, optimism, and devotion to duty which are so highly prized as attributes of mental health can hardly flourish in an atmosphere of harsh discipline and militant authority.

Restriction of Freedom. There are many ways in which the restriction of freedom is manifest in the typical school. Among these may be listed (1) a concept of class routine in which sitting in chairs or at desks for the whole period is expected and sometimes enforced; (2) a set curriculum, which restricts the freedom of the pupils to exercise self-direction; (3) school rules and regulations which students have had no part in formulating; (4) the teacher's fear that, if he allows spontaneous activity, the class will get out of hand; (5) the relative lack of opportunity to choose and pursue activities which are outside the realm of

traditionally conceived educational subjects; and (6) lack of freedom to pursue knowledge beyond the bounds of texts and references.

The approach to the extension of freedom in the classroom might well begin with the teacher's seeking greater freedom for himself. This should mean more than a reduction of rules and orders from higher authority; it should mean that the teacher is willing to devote time and intelligence to the cooperative solution of administrative problems. Those teachers who are quick to resent direction from above are often the ones who are first to complain about the time required for the discussion of administrative problems. Although teachers should be on guard against encroachments on their right to freedom of speech, they must not mistake freedom for license. The right to teach what and as they like should be within the realm of the teacher's code of ethics and within the framework of democratic philosophy.

The teacher, to a large extent, has within his power the privilege of extending the freedom of his pupils, even in the typical school situation. He can, for instance, see to it that pupils are not required to sit for long periods at their desks without intermission, he can allow them to move around to get materials and supplementary references, he can encourage trips to the school library, and he can encourage students to plan and execute field trips and excursions to places of interest. He can provide opportunities for the students to select what to study and what approaches are to be used in the study. He can help students organize their own plans of government for the classroom and encourage them to select competent officers to execute the policies chosen. Teachers who previously were "subject-matter" teachers and who have tried to make such variations as these are likely to report their surprise and gratification on finding their pupils capable of admirable self-direction. Moreover, they find that many of the tensions which had previously characterized the classroom tend to disappear.

None of what has been said implies that direction and control are unnecessary or undesirable. No sane person will say that government is unnecessary, but everyone likes to feel that he has a part in the stipulation of the rules which govern him.

By way of summary, it is the conviction of those who choose to regulate their affairs in the light of the democratic principle, that individual freedom or opportunity for self-realization are increased as people learn to fashion their actions, institutions, and arrangements along lines suggested by their own reason rather than by accepting the reasoning of others. The process of intelligence, however, must be guided by consideration for the rights and potentialities of each individual, as well as by the possibility of securing increased individual benefits through cooperative action. This faith in the superiority of the democratic ideal over any other known social principle

as a guide to the good life suggests that it is the most valuable cultural possession of democratic groups. As such, the ideal must become a part of the thought and practice of the young. Schools are needed to teach the democratic ideal, and the American secondary schools have a special responsibility for fulfilling that function.⁹

SUMMARY

A few prevalent school practices have the effect of being handicaps to the achievement of good mental health on the part of pupils. These practices are harmful to mental health because they prevent the fulfillment of some of the fundamental human needs. Unmet needs result in the appearance of symptoms that are indicative of poor mental health.

A set curriculum interferes with the need to be independent and to develop one's own purposes. Yet we know that many a child who has a task may lack a plan of *his own*. The set curriculum interferes with his fulfilling the need to manipulate and to satisfy his curiosity. It attempts to force children into the same mold, regardless of their unique backgrounds, proclivities, and experiences.

Uniform grading interferes with the need to be recognized for what one is rather than what others think one should be. It tends to destroy feelings of personal worth among those who cannot fill the academic requirements for passing and graduation, or among those who might require a slower pace. Uniform grading interferes with the need to achieve in terms of individual differences, over which the child has little or no control.

The practice of failing students tends to bring forth feelings of shame, inferiority, and insecurity. It tends to prevent the child from engaging in social intercourse with his physical peers. Failures frequently result in behavior manifestations of truancy, destruction, seclusiveness, bullying, and shiftlessness.

Homework, instead of bringing a child up to "standard," tends to widen individual differences. It places undue emphasis upon the virtue of academic superiority. But probably the strongest condemnation of homework is directed at the child's being deprived of opportunities for health-giving, developmental, free play. Physical exercise is as essential to good mental health as is mastery of the fundamentals. Neither should be allowed to assume undue proportions in the child's life.

Perhaps one of the most condemnable practices in school is that of authoritarianism. Certainly, viewing the school as preparation for democratic living, we cannot allow dogmatic authoritarianism to interfere with

⁹ By permission from *Foundations of Method for Secondary Schools*, by I. N. Thut and J. R. Gerberich. Copyright 1949, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., pp. 17-18.

the need for freedom or with the need for developing unique potentiality and creativity, as has been the experience of some other nations of the world.

Fortunately, there are hopeful indications that many of these questionable practices are now being challenged in some of our schools. Teachers can implement and hasten the better practices by study and experimentation. It will not do to blame tradition, the school board, or administrators. Teachers have an educational job to perform on adults that will greatly profit their pupils. Until these handicaps are removed or modified, the school cannot be presumed to be playing its maximum role in the improvement of mental health of school pupils.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. How does the greater universality of education in the United States bear upon a workable organization of the curriculum?
2. Can you cite, from your own experience, some instance of a child's being thwarted by the inflexibility of school requirements?
3. Could "progressive" practices be justified if there were no superiority in academic tests on the part of students who went to "progressive schools"?
4. Formulate a concept of tension-tolerance and present it to other individuals for criticism and suggestion.
5. Criticize the assertion that grades are not a lifelike situation.
6. Present as many arguments as you can to support the view that grades can and should contain a subjective element.
7. Evaluate some newer practices in grading and marking that you have seen employed.
8. Under what conditions would you deem nonpromotion to be advisable? Do your professional colleagues agree with you?
9. Under what conditions would you judge homework to be of value to elementary pupils? When would it be advisable for high-school pupils?
10. What are some specific steps that can be taken to reduce authoritarianism?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

AIKEN, WILFORD M., *The Story of the Eight-year Study*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942. 157 pp.

This book deals in detail with the use of "progressive" practices in the secondary school. Thirty schools, for an eight-year period, used in varying degrees practices which deviated from traditional approaches. The results, in terms of knowledge, behavior in and out of school, success in college, and preparation for life, are presented for the reader's evaluation.

BEAUMONT, HENRY, and FREEMAN GLENN MACOMBER, *Psychological Factors in Education*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949. 318 pp.

Positive approaches to better educational practice, based on psychological principles, is the message of this book. Human needs and how they can be satisfied

in the classroom, pupil guidance, individual differences, adjustment, and discipline are representative of the topics with which the authors deal.

SCHNEIDEMAN, ROSE, *Democratic Education in Practice*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945. 534 pp.

This book views education as a means of achieving a democratic way of living. The methods in language, arithmetic, and social studies which are most likely to be productive of this objective are described. One section of the book deals with the use of the unit approach in elementary-school practice. The book is constructive rather than critical.

SMITH, MORTIMER, *And Madly Teach*, Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1949. 107 pp.

The foreword states that "American education is so defective in theory and practice as seriously to threaten the long continuance of the way of life to further which this nation was founded." The author states the need for clear purposes toward which to work. He challenges many of the aims of education which are currently popular.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

NOTE: Films listed in this book are produced to help improve teaching and child-raising practices; it is therefore necessary to include for this chapter those that show problems and suggest solutions.

Broader Concept of Method, Part I, Developing Pupil Interest, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42nd St., New York 36. (13 min, BW, sd.)

A teacher-dominated, rote-recitation type of presentation is depicted. Typical effects of the approach on student attitudes, responses, and learning are portrayed. Should be shown in connection with the *Broader Concept of Method, Part II*, which illustrates commendable procedures.

Experimental Studies of Social Climate of Groups, Iowa State University, Extension Division, Iowa City, Iowa. (30 min, BW, sd.)

Shows behavior of groups of boys in organized clubs run on democratic, laissez-faire, and autocratic principles. How behavior varies as membership is transferred from one type of leadership to another. This film might well be shown in connection with Chap. 8.

Life with Junior, March of Time, 369 Lexington Ave., New York 17. (18 min, BW, sd.)

Junior is followed through a typical day, revealing his interests and problems. Acceptance of a new brother and refusing to eat are among the situations shown. Produced in cooperation with the Child Study Association of America.

Maintaining Classroom Discipline, McGraw-Hill. (14 min, BW, sd.)

This film would also be pertinent to Chap. 8. It is included here because it shows undesirable disciplinary techniques, besides indicating constructive approaches to the securing of proper conduct and commendable attitudes.

II

PERSONALITY PROBLEMS IN THE CLASSROOM

A NUMBER of factors are involved in the teacher's wise treatment of those behaviors which are called personality problems. First, it is necessary to remember that all behavior is caused. There is a reason for undesirable behavior just as surely as there is for those actions which are approved. If the behavior of a pupil is irritating to the teacher, it should be understood that basically the behavior is an attempt on the part of the pupil to adjust. He is not "just naturally ornery," as teachers sometimes say. The basic reason may be glandular, physiological, or neurological, but some cause is accountable for the disordered condition. Treatment in such instances is a medical problem. The cause underlying many problems may be environmental. Frequently, the trouble is caused by continuing tension, conflict, or deprivation; and sometimes these can be reduced in severity, with the help of an understanding teacher.

Second, as attempts at adjustment, objectionable behaviors (often called "defense mechanisms"), even though they are disturbing to the teacher, sometimes have desirable features. Aggressiveness, for instance, no matter how irritating it seems to the teacher, may be a desirable trait. Further, the degree and frequency of the use of the behavior may be more significant than the existence of the behavior in itself. In fact, contemporary psychologists are unwilling to evaluate the seriousness of a particular kind of action, as such. They want to know about the causal circumstances and about other phases of the child's behavior patterns. For example, a child who has been referred for study because of lying is not condemned for his behavior. We must know what the nature of his lie is. Is there a pattern to his lies? Is a particular category of behavior (social contacts) concerned? Is fear, desire for prestige, or longing for personal possessions a motivating factor? Are there other evidences besides lying which indicate inability to adjust? What is his home life like? Does he have any physical defects? In short, the lying is viewed only as an aspect of behavior—not as the totality. The degree and frequency of use, not the mechanism itself, is the major concern.

Third, defensive behavior should be regarded as presenting symptoms of difficulty or aspects of attempts at adjustment. Consequently, to change the behavior it is necessary to get rid of the cause. As is frequently pointed out in discussions of mental hygiene, one must treat the causes and not the symptoms. This is a pressing problem for teachers, because it is the immediate behavior that is so bothersome; hence, there is a tendency to correct the mechanism rather than to seek the cause. But good mental hygiene demands a search for causes.

REPRESENTATIVE PERSONALITY PROBLEMS

Negativism. Negativism may be defined as the habit of, or tendency toward, resisting direction, ignoring requests, or doing as one pleases in spite of rules to the contrary. It becomes an obstruction for the teacher, because it upsets the smooth routines of class procedures. There is a tendency to curb the symptom immediately and abruptly. This tendency is aggravated because it is easy to read into the behavior a disrespect for teacher prestige or to see in it a challenging of "properly constituted" authority.

Viewed from the mental hygiene standpoint, negativism is a normal phase of the process of maturing. It is an indication that the pupil is attempting to develop the healthy independence in which educators profess to believe. It may be an attempt to show that he, the negative person, is exercising the originality that makes it difficult for him to adhere to routines. Further, negativism is a passing phase and will be outgrown when the individual sees advantage in conformity. It can, of course, grow into an extreme difficulty, and undesirable habits of negativistic conduct sometimes develop. All teachers have encountered students at all school levels (and often adults) who continually resist advice, direction, and suggestion. They want their own way, apparently for no other reason than that it is their way; actually, there is a cause for their behavior, even though it may lie far in the past and may not be affected by present insecurity.

When teachers try to find out the cause of negativism, they are on the way to applying mental hygiene. (The cause may be demands that are unreasonable (when viewed from the eyes of the pupil), excessive adherence to routines, a hampering check by harsh discipline in the home, inability to perform requested tasks, or interference with activities which are in process at the time.)

To test the theory that the amount of frustration resulting from adult interference is positively related to the amount of negativistic behavior exhibited by nursery-school children, Frederiksen measured negativism by means of a series of standardized test situations and through observation. One group of children (frustrated group) was submitted to a teaching method

designed to produce mild frustration, while a second group (free group) was taught in such a manner that frustration would be reduced. The free group, he found, showed a decrease of negativism, especially to adults, while the frustrated group showed a slight increase, especially to children.¹

Recognizing such conditions as the causes of the negativism will immediately open the way to a more appropriate method of dealing with the situation than by the use of force or threat.

There are times when dealing with the symptom is entirely justifiable. In the interest of the mental health of the class as a whole it may be necessary to take a decisive attitude toward a particular pupil. Thus, a student who refuses to draw a particular map in World History because there are better maps in books may set a poor precedent for other pupils and in other situations, or his action may interfere with the culmination of some larger and more essential phases of the work as a whole. The need for conformity may be taught both by pleasurable experiences and by the deprivation of privilege because of nonconformity; but understanding is still important. Perhaps the pupil does not realize that drawing the map himself will help him to a better knowledge of geography. Patience and understanding thus play their useful roles in the control of negativism.

Lying. A definition of lying would depend on the definer's orientation. There are some who define any untruth as lying, while others will not admit to lying when the truth is really none of the other's business, or when the truth might do more harm than good. In fact, teaching children not to lie is a complicated problem because of the widespread acceptance of the social lie. If asked how he likes another's hat, a person of breeding may think it necessary to deviate from the truth rather than to say, "It's a nice hat for a twelve-year-old," or something else more pertinent than polite. Nevertheless, because adherence to the truth is an acknowledged ideal that should be held before young people, teachers have the responsibility of helping to teach it, in spite of the complications involved.

Respect for truthfulness may best be taught by helping the young person develop pride in his own reliability and honesty. Too often, among teachers and parents, a child is quickly censured for what he has said, because of a belief that he is lying. As a matter of fact, in young children there may be no deliberateness whatsoever attached to an "untruth." It may be that their "lie" about something is no more than a manifestation

¹ By permission from *Child Development*, 2d ed., by Elizabeth B. Hurlock. Copyright, 1950, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., p. 300. (Reference is made to N. Frederiksen, "The Effects of Frustration on Negativistic Behavior of Young Children," *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, Vol. 61, 1942, pp. 203-226.)

of their lack of maturity sufficient to discern and comprehend what is objectively seen. The "lie" is merely evidence of an immature interpretation. Again, it may be a matter of fancy or imagination, because young children often cannot distinguish their imaginings from reality. In fact, some adults may have difficulty remembering exactly the difference between what actually happened, what they wanted to have happen, and what they read that paralleled some experience they had had; or they even may not be sure whether something actually happened or whether they dreamed it. This is particularly true after some time has passed. Thus, a hasty condemnation of what the child has said as a "lie" may actually confuse him. Rather, it would be well to help him analyze his experience so that he can perceive it more accurately.

Exaggerations of truth characterize some adolescent children who are driven to boasting or "tall tales" in order to create excitement or to impress other people. The greater the adolescent's feeling of inadequacy the louder his boasting becomes. Young people who fail to attract attention to themselves or to create what they feel to be a proper impression resort to spinning yarns about their possessions, their ancestry, their accomplishments, or their abilities. Some adolescents do this so often and over so long a period that they appear to be inveterate liars. When this behavior persists it is a signal that the young person needs to be helped to achieve status, to find security or attract attention by more constructive means. Some of them need to curb their appetites for the wrong kind of excitement by learning where and how to find the right kind.²

Lying as a defense mechanism may be an attempt on the part of the individual to escape deserved blame and hence warrants disapproval. But the wise teacher's action will go further than disapproval. There will also be a search for the basic causes which underly inability to assume responsibility. There should be an attempt to distinguish between immaturity as a cause and some frustrating situation as the precipitating factor. Removal of the background factor will obviate the necessity for lying; but there will sometimes be occasion for explaining the workings of defense mechanisms to children—and to adults. In short, improvement of behavior will come about not only as a result of having the immediate causes eliminated, but also through perceiving a more distinctly clarified set of goals.

The foregoing interpretation of lying is an expression of the mental hygiene point of view. It shows the futility of treating symptoms and the value of searching for causes, because there can be such a variety of them. A blanket remedy for lying, or for any defense mechanism,

² Marian E. Breckenridge and E. Lee Vincent, *Child Development*, 2d ed., Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1949, pp. 497-498. By permission of the publisher.

cannot be cited because of variation in causes and in basic differences of personality.

Daydreaming or Reverie. Recent psychological literature has pointed out the fact that the recessive type of behavior which is manifested in daydreaming should be carefully studied. It may indicate that the individual is encountering such a number of frustrations in his everyday life that escape into a world of fantasy affords a welcome relief. If the reveries provide enough satisfaction, they may be indulged in to the extent that the individual will lose contact with reality and become a psychotic case. This extreme is what the classroom teacher must look for in his evaluation of a particular case. Excessive daydreaming deserves attention less for what it is at the moment than for what it may lead to at a later time.

Demanding more strict attention from the pupil, being sarcastic or derogatory about his mental "absences," or penalizing him for missing some of the conclusions presented in the class will not accomplish anything except a change in the type of escape, if it does that much. Excessive daydreaming results from such experiences as being socially unacceptable (or imagining that this is so), being unable to deal with the school tasks which are assigned, meeting competition which leads to frequent defeat, taking an apologetic attitude on account of one's background (or parents), or suffering from fear in the form of retreat from unpleasant or novel situations. These background causes serve to demonstrate the futility of demanding that the symptom should be abandoned.

Daydreaming has its distinctly advantageous aspects. Few individuals would accomplish anything noteworthy if they did not do some daydreaming about it beforehand. Reverie, to the extent that it helps determine and define goals, should be encouraged. The teacher's task is to determine the extent to which these dreams result in action and the extent to which they become ends in themselves. A high-school boy was noted by a teacher to be somewhat lonely, sometimes engaging in reverie, but participating in work sporadically. His teacher became interested in the subject of his activity and discovered that there was a pattern to his interest, namely, forestry. Whenever a report, subject, or problem could be related to forestry or conservation, the boy was active. His dreams of becoming a forester motivated his schoolwork. But the teacher also discovered a note of detachment in the daydreams that were revealed. The boy dreamed, besides, of becoming a big-league baseball player. The fact that he did not turn out for any high-school athletics (his vision was corrected by heavy lenses) and had no time to play baseball on account of his paper route indicated that this second daydream was unrealistic. Oddly enough, he had never played in an organized game of baseball but thought he might be a good hitter because one time he had hit a ball "pretty far" when he tossed it into the air. The teacher, through ques-

tioning, got him to see how unrealistic his baseball dreams were, and at the same time emphasized the validity of his interest and ability in forestry.

Daydreaming, in common with other defense mechanisms, is condemnable or commendable only in terms of its extent and results. Some daydreaming may be merely a temporary release from pressing events; and when it is intermittent and transitory, it can be regarded as acceptable. If it leads to action, it can be encouraged. The excessive daydreaming that moves on to loss of contact with reality is the kind that must become the concern of the teacher.

Rationalization. This may be defined as the assigning of false or distorted reasons to some act, completed or contemplated, about which the individual feels apologetic and which therefore needs justification. Different names have been given to this escape mechanism: (1) The Pollyanna type involves the saintly acceptance of unpleasant things. "My principal is very gruff and insulting; but it is just the thing I have needed all these years to jar me out of my complacency." (2) The sour-grapes mechanism involves telling oneself, and others, that the things that had been so mightily striven for were not really desired after all (in view of not having earned them). "I really did not want the part in the play because it would have made me neglect my studies." (3) Projection is the attempt to save face by blaming others for one's own errors, shortcomings, or failures. "I got a lot out of the course, particularly from my readings, but no one could possibly expect to make a good score on the kind of examination he gives. Why, some of the questions concerned points we never discussed in class."

The danger of rationalizations lies in their very plausibility. In fact, the mental processes "sound" so logical that they soon begin to fool not only the listener but the relator. It is at this point that the rationalization becomes a threat to mental health. The false reasons excuse the individual from an aggressive attack upon the problems of reality. It is as much an evasion of reality and a manifestation of a "withdrawal" reaction as are some forms of daydreaming.

Teachers could help to avert the tendency to rationalize by preventing, when possible, the child's being placed in situations where he has to excuse his actions. Asking for reasons why he was late, why an assignment was not completed, why he got into an argument, or why he took Mary's pencil will often force him into giving an explanation for a situation when he honestly does not understand the reasons for his behavior himself. That is to say, when a child says, "I do not know why I did it," he is often telling the entire truth—he does not understand his own motivations. To ask him for a plausible explanation forces him to rationalize his conduct. Apropos of this point, John J. B. Morgan says,

This operates so effectively and so frequently in the inner lives of children that parents and teachers should train themselves to discern it and should never encourage children to present reasons for their conduct. The reasons they offer will almost surely be so distorted that it is better not to talk about them.³

High-school pupils can be helped to avoid rationalization by having the workings of the process explained to them—by learning that it is an evasion of personal responsibility, a distortion of fact, and an indication of the need for developing more adequate personal resources. They should, at the same time, learn that the device is commonly used and that they need not consider themselves to be in poor mental health because they have adopted it.

Identification. This mechanism may be defined as the tendency to put oneself in another's shoes, sharing his victories and personally mourning his defeats. It is a device that will be seldom noticed in the lower grades but quite evident in the secondary school. The desire for membership in exclusive groups is frequently a manifestation of this mechanism, and it goes a long way in explaining the intense loyalties which are characteristic of adolescents. No doubt there is some justifiable satisfaction to be achieved from such identification. Sharing the gratifications and disappointments of other people is a commendable aspect of social development.

The danger in identification lies in excessive use. It can, and does, happen that some persons get such satisfaction from identification as to feel that individual effort is not necessary. Thus, a girl may proudly proclaim that she is a member of a certain home room that has earned and retained scholastic honors for the school. Yet her part actually constitutes a handicap to the group. Her lack of responsibility for carrying out assignments and undertakings is so marked that others have to work the harder to compensate for the poor record she makes. A boy may identify with some movie hero and advertise the superiority of the male of the species, yet himself take no responsible part in personal grooming or in learning the social graces.

Treating the obvious symptom is not enough. The teacher, in order to be genuinely helpful, must know the basic causes of the inferiority or feelings of inferiority, and help the student to overcome them. In the case of the girl cited in the previous paragraph, her inability to accept responsibility may arise from her having been unfavorably compared with a sister or a brother who is superior in academic pursuits. She feels that it is useless to attempt to beat, or even equal, their records, so she

³ John J. B. Morgan, *Child Psychology*, 3d ed., New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1942, p. 554. By permission of the publisher.

does not place herself in the position of possible defeat by actively competing. Perhaps the boy is apologetic about what he feels to be an inferior social background and needs personal help in achieving the conviction that what he, himself, *does* is more important than where he comes from.

Identification in an extreme degree is seen in individuals whose lives have been so impoverished that they finally lose themselves to the belief that they are such heroes as Napoleon, George Washington, or Jesus.

Compensation. Just as the name implies, compensation is the seeking of satisfaction or the attempt to avoid tension by replacing activity in the area of conflict by either additional effort or resort to another area. It may be of two types: (1) direct, in which the individual seeks satisfaction in an area of disappointment or weakness by exerting greater effort to the accomplishment of the goal; or (2) indirect, in which he leaves the field and seeks gratification in substitute activities. An example of direct compensation is seen in the pupil of average mental endowment who studies longer and more conscientiously (perhaps compulsively) than the typical student, in order to receive good grades.

A fourth-grade boy had been retained in the third grade, but so obviously gave evidence of discouragement and bewilderment that he was provisionally passed on to the fourth. There he worked so diligently that he did not go out at recess and had to be sent home in the afternoon, but he was still not doing fourth-grade work. The extra effort would be laudable if it produced results. In this case, it is regrettable that such pressures were exerted on the boy as to result in his neglecting normal, boyish activities.

Indirect compensation implies the abandonment of activity in an area of difficulty and the seeking of satisfaction elsewhere. The mediocre student employs indirect compensation when he gives up academic achievement as a goal and devotes his energies to athletic prowess or leadership in social activities.

Compensation, as seen from the examples cited, certainly possesses some distinct advantages. The hazard lies in overemphasis. It may be, as is too often the case, that the additional effort made to become an outstanding scholar interferes with the well-rounded development of the pupil. Eyestrain, restricted social experiences, limited development of interests can result from too close attention to scholastic achievement. Thus, more mental health problems are added to the burdens of the pupil. However, if the aim can be attained without the cramping of other desirable developments, then the compensation may be quite worth while.

Indirect compensation also has advantageous aspects. It may open up exploration of activities which would otherwise be ignored. It may lead

to greater achievement on account of the additional drive that is stimulated by the situation which is being avoided. The great danger of indirect compensation is that the individual may not derive genuine satisfaction from the compensating activity. Thus, if the student continues to worry about his inability to gain distinction in academic fields, it is doubtful, from the mental hygiene point of view, whether his compensation will be satisfying. If, as the result of indirect compensation, he is able honestly to say, "Academic accomplishment is not everything in the world," the compensation is more likely to be acceptable. On the other hand, if his statement, to be honest, must be something like this, "Now, I could be satisfied if I could just get on the honor roll," the adjustive value of the behavior is more questionable.

It is not always easy to find areas in which either direct or indirect compensation may be effective. It may be that additional study will still not result in superior accomplishment. The additional activity may only bring about a more rapid accumulation of tensions. Or, the feelings of inferiority awakened in the academic situation may become more intense if the pupil finds out that he cannot reach any greater success by his athletic efforts.

Compensation is, as a rule, not so obvious as the examples cited. Bullying may be the expression of an effort to compensate for inability to gain the wished-for degree of social acceptance. Stealing may be a compensation for being deprived of clothes or spending money such as are possessed by one's peers. Lack of courtesy often is more than a habit; it may be an attempt to cover up an inability to understand what is going on in class. Sarcastic remarks may stem from either well-founded or ill-founded feelings that other children are receiving favors. These forms of compensation are, of course, undesirable. On the other hand, such behaviors as staying after school to help the teacher, extreme courtesy in dealing with fellow students, or even devoted attention to the task at hand may be indicative of efforts to compensate for various tensions. Odd as it may seem, an overly "good" child may actually be motivated by deep-seated tensions. However, the symptom would not be regarded as serious unless it were coupled with other symptoms.

The teacher may aid the pupil in three ways: (1) He may assist him in trying to find areas of activity that are likely to yield compensating gratifications. This entails some knowledge about the student's interests and abilities, which may be gathered from records, from data about various tests, from observation of his spontaneous activities, and from conversations with him. (2) He may help him through giving him a more objective view of the situation, trying to show him that individuals vary in their ability to accomplish in various areas and that the very effectiveness of our society depends upon just such differences.

(3) He may explain the workings of the mechanism, thus attempting to help the pupil gain an insight into his own conduct so that he may arrive at a more hearty acceptance of himself and his personal limitations.

Displacement. This mechanism is somewhat like compensation, except that it is more temporary. It is an effort on the part of the individual to release the pent-up emotions generated by some frustrating situation.

There is a close analogy between the operation of steam in a boiler and emotion in the human organism. In both instances, safety or escape valves must be provided. If the pressure of steam, or of emotion, is increased or if the valves are blocked, the outlets of emotion repressed, and other vents not provided, an explosion is bound to occur. Sometimes there will be an accidental opening which will temporarily serve as escape valve. You have seen steam escaping through a seam or a small rust hole in a boiler; in the same way, wives, husbands, children, and other domesticated animals often serve as escape valve for "displaced" emotion.⁴

Displacement is being used by the child who twists the arm of a smaller classmate as a means of relief for having been reprimanded by the teacher or having been given a low grade. He is afraid to attack the teacher, but he can release his emotion by taking it out on another person. It is likely that a good many desks in high school are maliciously carved in an effort to release resentment aroused by autocratic discipline. Some of the derogatory remarks about teachers penciled on walls and in books are attempts to displace the emotions generated by failure or restriction.

The usual treatment of such symptoms is further discipline, deprivation of privilege, or a lowering of marks, but this only serves to intensify the situation. Although outward conformity may be secured, such conformity is likely to be temporary and, in the end, to bring on a more marked attempt at destruction or defamation. Because of this probable result, some psychiatrists ask parents and teachers to overlook "displacement" and seek the causes of the behavior. Thus, when the small child kicks his mother, the parents, instead of "tanning his hide" until he learns never to do it again, should ignore the child or quietly remove him until his "steam" has been dissipated, in the meantime seeking the basic cause of his resentment. A high-school student spoke sharply and impudently to his teacher when she returned a paper with the remark that it was not up to his usual performance. Instead of "jumping down his throat," she looked sadly at him and said, "Why, John, you're too much of a gentleman to say that." It was true, he was a gentleman; although no apology was demanded, he voluntarily said he was sorry and assured

⁴ S. H. Kraines and E. S. Thetford, *Managing Your Mind*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947, p. 142. By permission of the publisher.

her that it would not happen again. She had seen in his attitude the mechanism of displacement and treated it as the passing symptom that it was.

Displacement can be engineered to serve a constructive purpose. Play and art therapy (discussed in Chapters 13 and 15) are examples of the purposeful use of displacement. That is to say, a child's drawing of a child kicking an adult serves, to a degree, the same release function as an actual kicking would serve. Yet the uninitiated adult might be inclined to moralize about the drawing and spoil the therapeutic value. In the same way, children may displace their emotions by having, in their play, a temporarily hated adult become sick and die or be subjected to serious injury.

Since the mechanism of displacement is used in many different circumstances, no specific remedy can be recommended. It is something to which even those who are considered well-adjusted might temporarily resort. Two generalizations can be made: (1) The teachers should recognize the nature of the mechanism, so that they will be able to react to it for what it is. (2) The frustrating and irritating situations which might lead to its use should be guarded against. This, of course, is a very large order, since it entails such matters as a curriculum in which adjustments to individual differences are possible, a cooperative and understanding atmosphere pervading the whole school, teachers who understand and like children, and provisions for activities which will provide for the release of negative emotions.

Irradiation. This escape mechanism or, better, release mechanism might be termed multiple displacement. That is, irradiation refers to the release of tensions through a number of situations, rather than through just one object or circumstance. It is revealed in the conduct of both children and adults. The individual who strikes out at everyone and everything because of some frustration is resorting to irradiation. The child who disobeys the teacher, trips another child, quarrels with his playmates, shoves his neighbors in the cafeteria line, and in general creates a disturbance wherever he goes is exemplifying this mechanism. Much of what is generally termed irascibility is probably irradiation, with the possible difference that the latter is more temporary.

The inability to recover from tensions that result in irradiation can be partially blamed on the physical condition of the individual. Therefore, an explanation for the conduct might well include an investigation of such factors as diet, sleep, temporary infections (colds, infected eyes, boils, and the like), and excess activity that produces fatigue. Frustrations due to failure, unpopularity, autocratic classroom regimes, and being forced into unwelcomed activities also may serve as precipitating factors. Hence, the classroom atmosphere as a whole calls for investigation if the

mechanism is noticed in several children. These generalizations are pertinent at all levels of the school.

Withdrawal. Seclusive behavior, or withdrawal, refers to the tendency of an individual to avoid contacts with other people. It is manifest in bashfulness, reluctance to recite, playing or studying by oneself, and, in general, the "lone-wolf" type of behavior. This symptom of inability to adjust is regarded as a serious manifestation by psychologists and psychiatrists. An increasing number of teachers are becoming aware of the gravity of the symptom; but E. K. Wickman and Paul L. Boynton and B. H. McGaw found in studies in 1928 and 1934 that teachers, a decade or so ago, were more concerned with the behavior that tended to upset classroom routines.

It is natural for teachers to give more attention to such behavior as whispering, inattention, disobedience, carelessness, and lying, because these manifestations interfere with their own plans, and thus their personal integrity appears to be challenged. Furthermore, their stand can be easily rationalized by the explanation that they have to think of the welfare of the class as a whole. However, if the mental hygiene viewpoint is adopted, these disturbing overt behaviors may be less serious than seclusive and withdrawing behavior. There are two reasons for the relatively greater seriousness of the latter conduct: (1) Overt behavior, even though it be "misdirected," serves to let off tensions, whereas the seclusive behavior permits the basic tensions to remain as continual sources of irritation. This may result in a rather complete warping of the personality, so that later adjustment becomes increasingly improbable and the tensions may finally find an outlet in some distinctly criminal act. (2) The overt behavior, in spite of its disturbing effect on the teacher, is an attempt at adjustment. The individual is putting up some kind of battle against frustrations. As long as he is fighting, there is a chance that he will find a solution for his difficulties, especially if he is given some understanding guidance by his parents and teachers. Withdrawal, on the other hand, indicates a feeling of defeat—there is no overt attempt at adjustment. The teacher who would help in such a situation must not only direct behavior but also get some kind of activity started. He has the double job of overcoming inertia and guiding effort after it has been aroused.

A word of caution is in order. Just as we should not regard all lying, stealing, anger, or rationalization as symptomatic of some deep-seated maladjustment, neither should we regard every quiet individual as a clinical case. There can be no doubt that there are different degrees of strength in the drive toward socialization. Probably some of this drive is constitutional or inherited; but even if we accept the theory that socialization is entirely a learned process, it must be admitted that the various

experiences of several individuals would amount to a considerable difference by the time the children had reached school age. E. Kretschmer claimed that certain personality types were dependent upon bodily build. Carl Jung classified personalities into the extrovertive and introvertive types. W. H. Sheldon has pointed out that certain social characteristics (as well as other personality traits) are correlated with morphological types; that is, lean people are less inclined to be highly social than those who are heavy or stout. Even though the theories of these men have not been universally accepted, the belief that there are differences in basic personality, including drives toward socialization, should be given careful consideration.

Properly, great emphasis has been placed on the socialization of the individual. But if this is interpreted to mean that all children should be friendly and show a great deal of outgoing behavior, it is possible to do them much injustice. Forcing children into positions of leadership, companionship, recitations, and the like may actually serve to generate instead of divert tensions. Shy or lone (not lonely) children can be just as happy as those who are highly extrovertive.

R. D. is a case in point. As a child, he did outstanding work in grade and high school, but he spent a great deal of time reading and experimenting with his chemistry set and other projects which were started from time to time. He played baseball occasionally and well, but not with the enthusiasm of the average youth. In college he had a few friends and went out with them at intervals but seldom joined the "gang." In the army he was not inclined to join in the "bull sessions" but liked to read and engage in serious conversations with an older person. After discharge from the army he was married, took a position as a teacher and is apparently living a well-adjusted and happy life. It would have been possible to identify him as a seclusive individual at any time during his school life. The significant thing is that there were no other manifestations of adjustment difficulties. Thus, while we should have concern for the withdrawn person, we must take care to see him in his total behavioral situation and be careful not to diagnose on the basis of isolated symptoms.

Projection. A common method for "saving face" when a person fails, makes an error, or performs inadequately is for him to blame another person or some object for his own shortcomings. Rather than to shoulder the responsibility himself, he projects the inadequacy on some person or situation. "A clumsy carpenter blames his tools" is a cliché which is commonly applied to projection. The mechanism is used by persons of all ages; even the very young person is sometimes taught to slap the "nasty table" which bumped him on the head. Aside from the release of anger or disappointment, this serves no constructive purpose. It would be better

to control one's feelings and direct energy toward overcoming the obstacle, or at least to form the habit of facing one's own deficiencies as realities.

The James-Lange theory of emotion states that emotion results from bodily activity stimulated by the situation. Ordinarily, the situation itself is blamed for producing the emotion. The theory is commonly contrasted with the "common-sense" theory, which postulates that emotion is produced by the situation. William James, however, believed that emotions were the outcome of *the response* to the situation. That is, common sense would say that you see a bear, you are afraid, and you run; but the James-Lange theory says that the order of events is to see a bear, to run, and to be afraid. While the theory certainly does not explain all there is to emotion, there does seem to be this element of truth in it: giving vent to one's feelings often does tend to build up the emotion. If a person is insulted and immediately retorts with some vehement answer, he becomes more angry, whereas if he smiles and says, "You misunderstand me," the feelings do not mount so high.

The James-Lange theory throws light on the evaluation of projection as an adjustive mechanism. Projection, by providing physical or verbal expression, builds the emotion to a higher pitch—even if we do not believe that the expression produces the emotion. On the other hand, if the emotion is not allowed to mount, there is a better chance that some constructive measures will be taken to ease the situation. Thus, the student who fails to get a desired role in a play can, instead of blaming the teacher, reflect on his past negligence about assuming responsibility, see that it has been blameworthy, and begin to plan for the improvement of his conduct. If, instead of blaming his pen for a messy paper, he can be taught to look objectively at the situation and see that his own dilatory actions made it necessary for him to hurry when the work was due, he has a better chance to improve his behavior.

Efforts to help children avoid the use of projection will include various measures like the following: setting a good adult example, especially avoiding such resources as blaming inanimate objects for personal ineptness; refusing to take projections as valid excuses for not performing satisfactorily; explaining to upper grade and high-school students the natural workings of the mechanism; demonstrating and illustrating the need for personal responsibility in shaping the course of actions; helping pupils develop the skills which will obviate the need for projection.

It should be realized that projection is essentially an indication of emotional immaturity; hence it is perfectly normal for children of school age. However, since the habits one forms in childhood are only with difficulty overcome at a later age, projection should not too readily be disregarded as a passing phase of conduct. Many adults have not out-

grown the use of the mechanism and to that extent are emotionally immature, in spite of their chronological age. An early realization of the futility of projection—indeed, of the hazard it fosters by building up anger and resentment—would help to lay a foundation for the kind of maturity that is the goal of mental hygiene.

Malingering. This mechanism, involving the feigning of illness to avoid some unpleasant situation, has little, if any, positive advantage. It lacks the aggressive nature of attack that characterizes such behaviors as lying, negativism, compensation, or even displacement or irradiation. It is distinctly a retreat and hence deserves to be condemned in the same way as withdrawal. Another reason for rejecting it firmly is that by its very nature it encourages the development of psychosomatic disorders. That is, an individual who feigns illness is acting under the negative suggestion of illness; the idea of illness is actively, if not dominantly, present in his mental set. As a result, he is inclined to exaggerate and call attention to any mild aches or twinges which he does feel. A further danger is that his conscience may bother him and the way that will ease his feeling is actually to feel sick.

Well-meaning parents can stimulate the tendency of a child to malingering by being oversolicitous about his health. It is entirely reasonable that they should protect the child's health by seeing to it that he is in bed, even with minor illnesses, and they must make sure that the child's return to normal activity, after even a minor illness, is gradual. But at the same time, they must take care that the ill child does not receive an undue amount of attention that will turn illness into something pleasant for him. If he is read to more than ordinarily, if others of the family have to entertain him, if his whims in eating must be indulged, and if he is waited on a great deal, he may easily come to think that illness is an advantageous situation. He soon learns that he can be the center of attention and get his way easily by being ill and may feign illness, in order to continue being treated as so important a person. Having learned the techniques at home, he will be likely to try them at school. If he succeeds in his designs, he will have learned a technique that must ultimately be turned to his disadvantage.

The teacher is in an unenviable position. He must be careful not to press the child into activity when he is not up to par physically, yet he must not make him feel out of place by his being put aside when there is good reason for his not taking part with his mates. On the other hand, it is necessary for him to be careful not to indulge pretended illness. In order to avoid either extreme, it is important to observe rather closely the child who holds back from participation or who complains of illness. If he is active and happy when he is not being supervised by the teacher, and if he acts ill only when he has his attention, it may begin to be

suspicious. A school doctor or nurse can be of great assistance in such a case; but where such help is not available, the teacher's judgment must suffice. If he suspects malingering, the remedy might very well be rather abrupt treatment, leaving the "ailing" one out of games and going on without him. Of course, if malingering is only one of several types of escape that the child is experimenting with, the cause must be sought in terms of more prolonged adjustment than the mere experience of being happily ill at home.

Hypochondria. This defense mechanism is rather well defined by the following bit of humor: A hypochondriac is a person who, when you say, "How are you?" tells you. Whereas malingering is feigning illness, hypochondria is the tendency to make the most of illnesses which are really experienced. A headache, a sprain, or an upset stomach becomes a major disability for the hypochondriac.

Hypochondria is encouraged by the outdated notion that girls who are menstruating should be very careful not to engage in physical exercise, should avoid taking baths, and should get more rest than usual until the end, or near the end, of her period. The tendency to exaggerate the discomfort of the menstrual period has been encouraged by adults who use such terms as "the sick time" or "the curse" in referring to the phenomenon. It is the consensus of present-day medical authorities that a vast majority of menstrual difficulties can be blamed upon worry, misapprehension, and misunderstanding, that only in very few cases is there any physical ground for the existing widespread impression of disability and danger from exertion.

There are other manifestations of hypochondria besides that which is characteristic of menstruation, but the way the problem can be attacked will be suggested by the particular case to be treated. The nature of illness, including the psychological aspects of it, should be clearly made known. Youngsters should have pointed out to them what fun they are missing. An oversolicitous attitude should be avoided. The element of fear should be explained, and the encouraging thought should be added that many of the things which people fear never take place. Besides giving his explanation of this defense mechanism, the teacher can be helpful to its devotees by his treatment of them. He can listen politely, but not with too great interest, to their complaints; and he can discourage indulgence toward minor ailments by refusing to accept excuses for belated work.

As is the case in malingering, the teacher should bear in mind that the magnifying of ailments may have been resorted to because of some frustration, instead of being an unfortunate habit that has been stumbled upon by chance. In addition to refusing to indulge illnesses that are unimportant, the teacher might do well to search for such causes of frus-

tration as meaningless schoolwork, unsatisfactory social relationships, the threat of academic failure, or an attempt to justify failure in attaining some office or honor.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Teacher's View of Personality Problems. The general nature of nonadjustive behaviors is that they are misdirected attempts on the part of the individual to get rid of some tension or to avoid situations that are disliked. It is important for the teacher to keep in mind that these behavior manifestations are sometimes passive (daydreaming, shyness) and sometimes active (lying, rationalization, etc.) attempts at adjustment. Some are easy to overlook and others are forced upon our attention. Acceptance of this view will lead one to investigate the causes of behavior, instead of trying to get rid of the difficulty by making demands or by shaming.

Many of the defense mechanisms are not to be considered serious unless they are employed to an excessive degree; for example, daydreaming indulged in to the extent of losing contact with reality, or lying practiced so frequently that it becomes difficult for the liar to tell the truth at all. But even minor use of the defensive behaviors may be serious if several of them are used by the same individual in a number of different situations. That is, a person who rationalizes some of his actions can hardly be considered a mental health case; whereas, another person who does no more rationalizing but who does daydream, tends to manifest hypochondria, and characteristically remains aloof from others may warrant further study. The point may be illustrated by the experience of the author in screening naval recruits for adaptability for service. It was found that almost all recruits answered some of the items on a fifty-five-item adjustment questionnaire in an atypical manner. If, however, any recruit answered any eleven or more items negatively, regardless of the seriousness of single items, he was unfit for military service. (As a precaution in using test data, it should be mentioned that the questionnaire was not the final test. Each recruit, thus screened through eleven atypical items, was orally interviewed to determine the validity of his responses, and was then referred to the psychiatric board for further study.)

Teachers hear and read so much about the nature and implications of individual differences that, when reference is made to the necessity for paying attention to such differences, they are likely to feel that "it is just more of the same old stuff." Yet the fact remains that attention to individual differences is at the core of intelligent application of mental hygiene principles. Certainly, in dealing with defense mechanisms, it is necessary to know the person who is using any of the techniques before wise action can be taken in his case. It can be said with considerable

certainly that mental health in the classroom is dependent upon a knowledge of the individual—his past experiences, his motivations, his interests, his capacities, his limitations, his home life, his sibling relationships, and his problems of the moment. This is not an impossible order. Many teachers have stored up a great amount of this information because they are careful observers and attentive listeners. Pertinent information may be obtained from looking over the child's cumulative record, if this kind of record has been kept. The papers a pupil writes, the pictures he draws, the way he plays may be used for gaining insight into individual behavior, as is explained elsewhere in this book. Sociograms will give evidence of the child's ability to make friends and will indicate the degree of acceptance he has with the group. Questionnaires, if they are used as points of departure for questioning, are of considerable value. But, let it be repeated, probably the most significant asset of all is the ability to see and hear what is daily taking place.

A point repeatedly made in books on educational psychology, child development, teaching method, and mental hygiene is the outstanding importance of good adult example. It is well known that children are likely to learn more about conduct from example than they will by precept; in fact, many authorities in the fields of childhood and adolescence declare that adult example is *the* factor in the development of behavior patterns. "As the teacher, so is the school" is a pertinent indication of the pupils' reactions to example. If the teacher exercises projection, displacement, rationalization, and hypochondria, he is sure to be setting the stage for the appearance of such mechanisms in the behavior of his pupils. That pupils take on the behavior characteristics of their teachers very promptly is a recognized fact. This does not imply that a teacher alone is responsible for each pupil's actions; but there is no doubt that upon the class as a whole—as far as the children's behavior in the classroom is concerned—he has a strong influence.

The "Classroom Atmosphere." The treatment and avoidance of mechanisms is governed by many specific elements, as has been indicated in the foregoing pages; but the classroom atmosphere as a whole needs to be given a general consideration. This factor has to do, first of all (and again), with the behavior of the teacher. The reason why this book has considerable space devoted to the mental health of the teacher is that he is primarily responsible for the classroom atmosphere. Among the factors affecting the mental health of the pupil, probably first place should be assigned to the teacher's manifestation of friendliness. "Simple friendliness in the schoolroom would seem to be one of those easily attainable and obviously desirable conditions for any human enterprise having to do with mental good health, but the visitor to schools finds it in shockingly

few of the places he visits.”⁵ This atmosphere of friendliness is not just an attitude of the teacher, it is also a reflection of the organization of the schoolroom. When there is free interchange of ideas, cooperative endeavor, the sharing of responsibility, and a feeling of personal worth there is a better chance for the spirit of friendliness to be generated.

The classroom atmosphere will also be influenced by such things as clarity and personal meaning of the activities of the school. If the pupils, at any level, understand and accept as their own the purposes of instruction, the atmosphere will be more conducive to mental health. On the other hand, if schoolwork takes on the aspect of imposed tasks somewhat related to punishment, then the pupils and the teachers will swelter in the oppressive weather which is generated. “Meaningful” work must necessarily be in terms of individual differences. Grades, passing, pleasing the teacher, all have different meanings for various pupils. The effect of competition must be evaluated. If all pupils are made to strive for the same goals, some will inevitably be discouraged by their lack of success in competition while others will gain inflated ideas of their own importance and ability. Neither of these attitudes will help to conserve a wholesome classroom atmosphere.

The physical aspects of the room also must be taken into account. There are many classrooms which were designed before the significance of physical surroundings was widely recognized; but even these can be brightened with pictures (which are changed periodically), by shelves of books and magazines, by an aquarium, by orderliness of the teacher’s desk and by an attractive vase of flowers. If pupils are allowed to participate in the decoration of the classroom, the physical aspects are reinforced in value by the emotions awakened in the children with regard to personal possession.

Unfortunately, it is still true that in many schools the principal purposes are to pass examinations and to get satisfactory grades. As long as this situation remains, school will continue to be a chore. When these aims are made incidental, when they are used to secure information about growth and areas which need additional attention, then they can contribute to the feeling of the pupils that they are engaged in productive and creative work.

Apropos of the classroom atmosphere, W. Carson Ryan says,

The teacher who is a wholesome, well-adjusted human being seems to have tremendous influence in producing the kind of atmosphere in which other human beings thrive. Friendliness, understanding, adaptability—these apparently simple elements of everyday living include some of the major factors

⁵ W. Carson Ryan, *Mental Health through Education*, New York: The Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1938, p. 31. By permission of the publisher.

in mental hygiene, and they are, in part at least, within the control of teachers in their own classrooms and with their own groups of children.⁶

It can readily be seen that thoughtful attention to the classroom atmosphere can go far toward avoiding the situations which will lead children to use defense mechanisms in the classroom. A wholesome atmosphere will provide a set of environmental stimuli which will ameliorate the tensions generated by out-of-school situations. The defense mechanisms already in operation will not thrive in a wholesome classroom atmosphere.

SUMMARY

Dealing with defense mechanisms in the ordinary classroom involves the following considerations: (1) Mechanisms are attempts on the part of the individual to adjust. (2) A person using one or two mechanisms should not be considered an abnormal individual or be treated as such. (3) The development of skills will obviate the necessity for using the mechanisms. (4) There should be a continuing effort to develop objectivity on the part of all pupils. (5) Keeping in good physical health will diminish the need for resorting to the use of defense mechanisms. (6) Wholesome participation in social activities is an antidote for the tensions which lead to escape mechanisms. (7) It is basic that treating the symptom should be replaced by a search for and removal of the cause. (8) Provision of a good adult example will diminish the tendency to resort to nonadjustive techniques. (9) Causes of emotional disturbances are multiple, so that the classroom atmosphere as a whole should receive the cooperative attention of teachers and pupils. (10) Participation in meaningful work will allow little time for the brooding which stimulates the development of emotional tensions. (11) There are no panaceas for the treatment of defense mechanisms, because each individual will differ from others in his reason for using them.)

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Describe to your fellow class members some instance of pupil misbehavior that was constructively treated through a search for causes.
2. Under what circumstances, if any, would you consider a lie to be justifiable?
3. Outline a procedure for helping a junior-high-school pupil who apparently engages in excessive daydreaming.
4. Reflect on your own behavior for the past three days. Have you engaged in any form of rationalization? Was the process of any value?
5. Explain in detail why one's physical status might contribute to the manifestation of irradiation.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 289. By permission of the publisher.

6. Outline a program for dealing with a genuinely ill child that might tend to prevent malingerer.
7. Take a poll of your class in mental hygiene and see how many of the students have any phobias. If any are found, try to get the persons who have them to explain the causes.
8. Make a list of ten or twelve items that should be included in a teacher's view of behavior problems.
9. Suggest a number of specific steps for improving the general classroom atmosphere of any school.

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

BINGHAM, JUNE, *Do Cows Have Neuroses?* White Plains, N. Y.: The Westchester Mental Hygiene Association, 1949. 15 pp.

Cows, in general, do not have neuroses . . . but people do. The causes (too much pushing) of emotional difficulties are briefly explained. Normal, neurotic, and psychotic behaviors are compared. Some general principles which foster normality are stated.

CUTTS, NORMA E., and NICHOLAS MOSELEY, *Practical School Discipline and Mental Hygiene*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941, pp. 80-102.

The authors discuss in this chapter many of the common problems that are encountered in the classroom. Among these are fighting, restlessness, ignoring rules, disobedience, stealing, truancy, and timidity. It will be helpful in achieving an objective view of children's behavior.

Department of Child Guidance, Board of Education, Newark, N. J., *Mental Hygiene in the Classroom*, New York: National Committee for Mental Hygiene, Inc., 1931 (reprinted 1949). 47 pp.

"Education in the past has been too much interested in brains and too little in personality" (p. 5). This booklet suggests specific remedies for this oversight in education. Analyses of the causes of misbehavior, tardiness, truancy, exhibitionism, shyness, sex problems, and the like are made. Procedures for solution are proposed.

PRESTON, GEORGE H., *Psychiatry for the Curious*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1940. 148 pp.

The author's conversational style and lively pen drawings add to the interest of a sound book. The meaning, causes, and healthful view of minor and major emotional and mental disturbances are portrayed. The book is not specifically written for teachers. The stress is on human understanding in general.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Picture in Your Mind, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42nd St., New York 36. (16 min, BW, sd.)

This shows the background and growth of prejudice from early times. It presents the role of each person in bringing about a better, more peaceful world.

Problem Children, Pennsylvania State College, Audio-Visual Aids Laboratory, State College, Pa. (20 min, BW, sd.)

A story of two children which shows how their conduct is influenced by their relationships in the home and the school.

Psychoneuroses with Compulsive Trends in the Making, New York University Film Library, 26 Washington Square, New York 3. (60 min, BW, si.)

The subtitle of this film is "Life History of Mary from Birth to Seven Years." It shows how a superior child develops a neurosis. It indicates that the average child, in a normal family, may fail to get needed special care.

I2

CONSTRUCTIVE CLASSROOM APPROACHES TO MENTAL HEALTH

IT HAS been indicated earlier that one of the major reasons why the concept of mental health must be a classroom emphasis is that, in the average situation, too few specialists are available. Moreover, many of the children who need help are not necessarily in such dire difficulty as to warrant the help of specialists. Most of these children merely need to be more adequately understood, so that optimum opportunities for development will be open to them. For these reasons, constructive approaches to mental health that are being used—and that can be more widely used—need to be emphasized and clarified.

As in other sections of this book, the stress is on meeting the needs of children, which itself depends upon a more complete understanding of each child. Constructive classroom approaches are thus based upon the various means by which we may know our pupils and better satisfy their unique needs.

SCHOOL RECORDS

School Marks. Many studies of traditional marking systems (in terms of letter or numerical grades) indicate that there is great variation in their meaning. An A or a B assigned by two different teachers may indicate quite different levels of accomplishment. One teacher may mean by an A that the pupil is doing a high quality of work—in the upper 5 or 10 per cent of the class—while another teacher's A may mean that the pupil is serious, industrious, conscientious, and socially considerate and that, in spite of his doing only average quality of work, he is doing his best. Administrative policies also may differ. Some principals may require that all pupils receive passing marks, while others may recommend that a given proportion of the class should get failing marks.

This is not the place to postulate the perfect grading system. No more need be said than that teachers in a given school would find it advantageous to hold a series of staff meetings to discuss the meaning and implications of the marks given to the pupils in the school. Even though the

system in vogue should remain unchanged, out of the discussion might grow a better understanding of the meanings, as well as the limitations, of the grades on the pupils' record cards. An understanding of what the teachers of earlier classes meant by the grades they assigned would make it more possible for the present teacher of the pupil concerned to give him constructive assistance. He could, for instance, know whether a given pupil would be likely to need help in becoming better adapted socially or whether he should put initial emphasis on finding additional stimulating work of an academic nature for him to do.

While a teacher should be on guard against being influenced by the grades previously assigned, he can be helped to avoid biases in his own grading by making comparisons with previous marks. A teacher who had rated the work of John M. as outstanding was surprised to see that John's previous grades were substantially lower than those being given him at the time. This made her pause to examine her own evaluation, and she discovered that John's work—as well as his social attitude—was distinctly mediocre. She felt, upon reflection, that she was overgrading John because he was extremely courteous and considerate to her and always had a cheerful smile for her. A more careful examination resulted in a lowering of his grade and in greater stress upon his social adjustment, as well as more attention to his academic difficulties.

Probably the main thing for a teacher to bear in mind, while attempting to use school marks as a constructive mental hygiene approach, is that they are more than designations of the degree of accomplishment. Marks should serve (1) to check on the effectiveness of his own procedures; (2) to serve as a means of evaluating the educational hypotheses upon which the school operates; (3) to provide a better means for effective guidance of individual students; (4) to inform pupils, other teachers, and parents regarding educational growth; and (5) to inform later teachers or employers as to the potentialities of the pupil.

Anecdotal Records. An anecdotal record is a verbal description of some typical aspect or incident of the pupil's behavior. Unfortunately, the anecdotal record has been misused by some teachers' recording bizarre or unusual actions or events. This breaks down the purpose of the device, which is to give a representative view of the child so that objectives for growth and evaluations of growth can be established. One account is not sufficient. Anecdotal records should be made once or twice a week during a term, in order to formulate a basis for diagnosis and a basis for evaluation. This kind of record is designed to improve professional insight, to present means for a better understanding of the child. It should be specific and should include a variety of incidents. Dates, persons, and actions should be objectively recorded.

One of a series of anecdotal accounts of Jackie, whom the teacher had selected for special study, is recorded below in order to show the typicalness of behavior.

September 22

Jackie has a fresh shirt this morning. While others are doing dictionary work he is trying to talk to Harvey in sign language—makes “catching” motion, sees me watching him, looks at his book. Makes motion as if rolling something on his desk.

“Jackie, have you finished your dictionary work?”

“No’m, I’m just fixin’ to git it.”

He got up and whispered to Bob, who sits in front of him.

Bob handed Jackie a long red pencil.

At recess Jackie wrote his misspelled words quickly and was out ready to play softball, yelling “Play ball!” as he rushed out of the building.

[Author’s evaluation:] The teacher has caught in this first entry something of Jackie’s style of movement, his keen interest in baseball, his manner of relating to friends and to the teacher, his disposal of schoolwork in competition with outside interests, his rush of energy and freedom of direction.¹

It is the entire series of anecdotes that gives insight into the behavior of a pupil. As the teacher reads and rereads the reports, a clearer picture of the pupil’s patterns, problems, and motivations will appear. His view of companions, attitude toward school and home, major interests, strengths and weaknesses will become more apparent and give clues for a better understanding of him. It is not implied that this technique is a panacea, but it is a readily available, easily manipulated device, which any teacher can use. As he works with the technique and sees the pertinence or the uselessness of certain entries, it will increase in value.

Case Studies. Although the anecdotal record reveals but a small portion of the child’s life, it is valuable in providing a more objective insight into behavior. There are, however, occasions when a more detailed analysis of conduct is required. Although the vast majority of children will make adjustments with only infrequent evidence of difficulty, some will manifest marked disturbance. When a child gives signs of acute trouble through (1) continued display of symptoms, (2) quite unusual behavior, or (3) engaging in intense actions, a case study is warranted. A case study could be of value for any child; but, since the teacher’s time is limited, in ordinary circumstances it is well to save the case study for the distinctly unusual individual. If he is to receive the most constructive help, as full data will be needed as it is possible to record. This help can be

¹ *Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*, 1950 Yearbook of National Education Association, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C., 1950, p. 187. By permission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

provided by specialists. The really basic requirements are time, interest in the child, and a plan for action. If the teacher will supply the first two and use some modification of the plan presented below, he will be able to help some of the most difficult cases of adjustment and provide a basis for future healthy personality growth. Data needed might well include the following:

1. Initial data. This item will include identifying characteristics such as name; sex; exact age; address; grade in school; religion; father's name, occupation, and education; mother's name, occupation, and education; nationality; and the names and ages of brothers and sisters.

2. Abilities. Included here will be mental-test data,² results of tests of special abilities (art, music, mechanics), formal observations such as the anecdotal record, and informal observations.

3. Educational background. It will be informative to know the age at which school was begun, schools attended, regularity of attendance, evaluation by previous teachers, former relationships with classmates, and the pupil's present attitude toward school. Achievement-test data are valuable for evaluating present status, whether it be that of a primary child or a high-school pupil.

4. Home and neighborhood. Pertinent data will have reference to the physical characteristics of the home—spaciousness; conveniences; cultural aspects (reading material, radio, play equipment); mental and physical health of parents, siblings, and relatives; whether or not the home is stable; and what is its characteristic emotional tone. Significant neighborhood items are opportunities for play and recreation, financial and cultural aspects, and distance from and means of conveyance to school.

5. Health. Comparative strength and vigor, physical handicaps, frequency of physical examinations, attitudes toward health and cleanliness, disfigurements (scars, birthmarks, odd features), operations and corrective therapy, and dental record are data which may signify the sources of difficulty.

6. Social adjustment. Such things as friendships, loneliness, ability to cooperate, dishonesty, selfishness, sensitiveness, resentfulness, and self-control are representative of the kind of entries that may prove of value. Relationships with peers, siblings, parents and other adults may be noted in terms of the foregoing characteristics. It is extremely important to record the individual's personal reaction to his social contacts as a supplement to the more objective data which are accumulated.

7. Interests. Play and reading interests, vocational ambitions (or lack of them), hobbies, family and sibling interests which are enjoyed in common, and interest in school activities are likely to be profitable entries in the

² See the section below relating to the proper use of test data.

case history. Anecdotal records are a valuable source of information. Standardized interest blanks can serve as a starting point for a detailed analysis of special interests.³

8. Contacts with agencies. If the child has been serviced by any social agency, try to obtain the information recorded and the recommendations made. If the child has been in a juvenile court, give the date, charge, findings, and disposition of the case. There are many agencies which have information about children that will be helpful in bettering the adjustment of the particular child. Unfortunately, there is no uniform dictate as to who is responsible for coordinating the use of the data. A start must be made at some point and it seems worth while to recommend that teachers, instead of continuing to "pass the buck," study the possibility of assuming responsibility for such coordination.

9. Behavior. Much of the above has to do with the behavior of the individual being studied. However, attention should be specifically directed to such manifestations as the following: dreaminess, nervousness, bullying, dependence, tantrums, persistence, moods, initiative, truthfulness, excuse making, work habits, obedience, tact, humor, and the like. All forms of emotional manifestations and emotional control should be noted.

10. Steps to be taken. On the basis of the above data, the teacher should be willing to make some tentative summary and recommendation. The recommendation may be something for the family or the school to do. If it is a recommendation to the pupil himself, care must be taken not to overwhelm him with good advice. Confine suggestions to one or two items. If these are heeded, it may then be appropriate to make further suggestions. It will frequently happen that significant recommendations can be made before all nine of the foregoing items are completed; but the case study will be incomplete without specific recommendations of some sort.

11. Follow-up. This part of the case study is all too often omitted. Actually, it is just as essential a part of the entire procedure as is a recommendation. There are three reasons for its being of major importance. (1) The parents, the teachers, or the child will need some checking to see if progress is being made. They may need to be reminded of the importance of doing something. A well-timed question about progress will serve to stimulate the parent, other teachers, or the child to

³ Examples are: Interest Inventory for Elementary Grades: George Washington University, grades four to six; Interest-Values Inventory: Teachers College, Columbia University, grades nine to sixteen; and Interest Questionnaire for High School Students: Teachers College, Columbia University. The Vocational Interest Blank by E. K. Strong has been widely used for data on vocational interest at the high-school and college levels.

carry out the recommendations. (2) The follow-up will help the teacher evaluate the effectiveness of his study. He will be able to save time on the next study by noting shortcomings and strengths of the present one. The follow-up will serve to refine the procedures and strengthen the recommendations. (3) The follow-up will be likely to provide further information that can serve to modify and strengthen the effectiveness of the present study.

One other observation on the case study should be noted: Data do not supply the diagnosis. Instruments do not make the diagnosis for a medical doctor. He must interpret the data accumulated through the use of instruments and through questioning the patient. Similarly, the data of the case study must be interpreted by the teacher. He must weigh one factor against another. Validity of the data must be determined. He must know how the subject feels—not just what conditions surround him. Guesswork is necessary. But one fellow's guess is not so good as another's. You have laid a foundation for interpretation. You may be wrong this time. But accuracy will increase. Remember that, in a large number of cases, if the teacher does nothing to help the child who is in difficulty, the chances of his being helped by anyone are often quite limited.

Using Standardized Test Data. Much valuable help is afforded the classroom in the form of standardized tests if the results are wisely viewed. But, if tests are to serve their maximum usefulness, there must be due regard for their limitations and a knowledge of what they do and do not do. We might well begin our understanding of tests by appreciating what they are. Any test is only a sample. A psychological test is a sample of behavior. An intelligence test is a sample of intellectual behavior. An achievement test is a sample of academic knowledge. We must carefully avoid thinking that a test is a *measure* of anything. The sample is a valuable indication of the whole thing (personality, knowledge, intelligence) but it is not *the thing*.

If we accept the thesis that an intelligence test is an indication of ability to adjust, we can immediately see that there are various kinds and phases of intelligence. The typical intelligence test indicates to a marked degree the kind of intelligence that is required for academic work. It does not indicate, with a dependable degree of accuracy, what we might call social intelligence. It does not indicate the energy, motivation, and habits that condition the effectiveness of intelligence on wider realms of adjustment. Achievement tests are subject to the same limitation. They do not indicate the actual functioning of knowledge of geography or arithmetic in the solution of everyday problems. This, however, does not mean that the tests are of no value. Clues to behavior are important as a help to understanding the pupil. Approximations are better than subjective guesses. A guided judgment is superior to a haphazard evaluation. But

the misconception that tests are accurate measures must be abandoned if the tests are to foster mental health.

Tests are approximations. That the implications of this statement are not appreciated is revealed in such teacher-made remarks as "I have an I.Q. of 118," "He's hopeless. His I.Q. is only 88." When did the teacher get a score of 118? It was in his junior year of high school. What was the test? He could not remember. Was another test given to the youngster who had scored 88? No, he had been assured that the validity and reliability of the test were high. An experienced user of tests knows that on equivalent forms ⁴ of a test, an individual might as easily make a lower score on the second test as he would a higher one. A lower score on an equivalent test given at the end of the term, as compared to the one given at the beginning of the term, does not necessarily indicate a regression of intelligence. The significant point to be considered is the trend of scores that can be perceived as the result of a continuous program of testing. We can now modify our statement of the meaning of a test by saying: A test is an *indication* of the individual's *present* status (in whatever is being tested). In reporting test results we should say, "Frank indicated an I.Q. of approximately 118, in January, on Form B of the Otis Self-Administering Test of Mental Ability, Intermediate Examination." This would lead to a different outlook when a variant score was achieved on the California Test of Mental Maturity.

The need for precaution in evaluating test results is well illustrated by the remarks of a superintendent of a home for the feeble-minded. He said, "I have often been asked what the critical score for commitment should be. I must say that I cannot answer the question. It all depends. Some children with an I.Q. of 70 are socially inept and incapable of any degree of self-dependence. Some children with an I.Q. of 50 are quite capable of doing work on a farm or in the home. Often we find that individuals with an I.Q. as low as 50 are socially adequate and have special capacities that would make it unwise to place them in an institution." The fact that the tests to which he referred were administered by competent psychometrists might well lead teachers to view quite critically the test results they encounter in the school.

Intelligence tests are valuable *indicators* of the mental growth of pupils. While an I.Q. gives some idea of the individual's potential, it is more pertinent for the teacher to know his mental age. Two children in the second (or the eighth) grade may have different I.Q.'s but be of the same mental age. It is the mental age that gives the quickest clue to the pupil's

⁴ Equivalent forms of a test are two or more tests covering the same material. The questions differ but are of the same degree of difficulty. Theoretically, if both tests were administered to one individual in successive hours, the scores would be identical.

present learning ability. For example, assuming that a mental age of 6.5 years is required for the successful beginning of reading, a child with an I.Q. of 80 will be ready by the time he is about eight years old, when, at his rate of development, he will reach the requisite mental age. In somewhat the same way, the mental age will quickly give the teacher an insight into a pupil's relative ability to do the tasks that other members of his class are doing.

Achievement tests, if they are intelligently interpreted, can be of service in offering motivation. A visitor in a seventh grade noted with some concern that the results of an achievement test had been posted on the board in histogram form. When there was an opportunity to question a child as to how he felt about having the results posted, the visitor was surprised to find that the pupil, although not ranking high, was well satisfied. He said, "Well, it's true that I am not the highest in the class; but look at the progress I have made. Frank is still ahead of me but look how far I have come since the first of the year" (see Fig. 3). "Here I

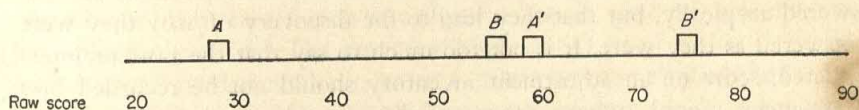


Fig. 3. Using test scores to motivate pupils.

was at the beginning of the year (indicating *A*) and here I am now (indicating *A'*). Frank was here (indicating *B*) but he progressed fewer points than I did (indicating *B'*).” Both pupils should feel proud—Frank of his rank and the other child of his growth. Achievement tests should be used for what they are intended to do, namely, to present an idea of the pupil's relative strengths or weaknesses, to evaluate his rate of growth, and to make rough interschool comparisons. Certainly it is a misuse of achievement tests to base grades upon them, to coach students to come up to prescribed norms, or to fail to take into consideration unique problems and curricular approaches when rough comparisons of two schools are being made.

Personality inventories deserve the attention of the teacher in the study of individual children. But, as is the case with intelligence and achievement tests, raw scores must be interpreted cautiously. It is certainly not enough to know that a given pupil ranks in the lowest quarter of the class on total scores. No great insight is gained by seeing that he is in the class of scores that is called “poor adjustment” or in some other seemingly descriptive category. The important thing is to know why the score was such as it was. Sometimes environmental factors must be changed. Sometimes the individual is too conscientious in his answers.

For example, there is a high-school youth who answered "Do you have headaches?" with a "Yes." (When he was in the first grade he had had a headache after a smallpox vaccination.) "Yes," he had walked in his sleep. (His mother said that when he was three he walked in his sleep while they were visiting his grandparents.) "Yes," he had dizzy spells. (When he stooped to a lower shelf in a library for a time, he was dizzy after he straightened up.) "Yes," he had some unusual fears. (Two years ago he was afraid when some boys dared him to wade across a swollen, icy stream during the spring floods.) If his score had been taken at face value, he could have been rated a neurotic. When the reasons for his answers were considered, there was no cause for concern.

The personality inventory can provide an excellent point of departure for a personal interview. The atypical answers narrow the range of possible difficulties that should be explored. It is easy to discover if the atypical answers center about some particular area; e.g., home, school, health, social adjustment, or emotional control and emotional manifestations. But again, the important thing is not that the questions are answered atypically, but that they lead to the discovery of *why* they were answered as they were. It is not too much to say that the raw, or interpolated, score on an adjustment inventory should not be recorded in a permanent record, where others might misunderstand its import. It should be used by the present teacher for discovering those who need help and who might otherwise escape detection and for narrowing the range of areas that warrant further investigation.

Misuses of standardized tests would include the following items:

1. Basing grades or marks on the results.
2. Categorizing pupils on the basis of their scores.
3. Believing that test scores are infallible.
4. Refusing to use them at all, because they possess limitations.

Uses of standardized tests would include the following items:

1. As a help in defining and evaluating progress toward specific goals.
2. Discovering where emphasis has been, or should be, placed.
3. Determining effective teaching and counseling methods.
4. Using results as a source of motivation.
5. Evaluating group accomplishment.
6. Training in the use of language and thinking.

Standardized tests can advantageously be used for obtaining further insight into the behavior of individual pupils. They need not be rejected entirely because of their inherent limitations, but it is necessary to exercise skill in interpreting the results. "In other words, he [the practical person] takes the very common-sense point of view that the proper thing

to be done under the circumstances is to make the best possible use of such tools as exist, while waiting for better ones to be developed.”⁵

PERIODIC REVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Despite the courses teachers have taken to become certified as teachers, it is easy for them to lose sight of the various basic objectives of education. Giving attention to the many details of teaching a fourth-grade or a high-school French class too often overshadows the realization that education is a many-faceted undertaking. There are numberless areas of growth that must be given attention in effective education. When too great a share of attention is devoted to the academic aspects of education, attention needed for the wider purposes of education becomes obscured. For the sake of emphasis, even at the cost of duplication of other courses, some of the statements of educational objectives will be reiterated in this section.

The 1918 Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education Statement of Aims. The most widely known statement of educational aims is probably that which is called the “seven cardinal principles of secondary education.” The items included are (1) good health, (2) command of the fundamental processes, (3) worthy home membership, (4) vocational efficiency, (5) civic efficiency, (6) worthy use of leisure time, (7) ethical character. Even a little reflection will help a teacher realize that a constructive approach to classroom problems and improved mental health would result from a serious attempt to put these objectives to work in the classroom. They are quite as pertinent at the elementary level as they are at the secondary level.

New York State Objectives. A committee of teachers and administrators in the state of New York formulated the following “cardinal objectives for the elementary school”:

1. To understand and practice desirable social relationships.
2. To discover and develop his [the child's] own desirable individual aptitudes.
3. To cultivate the habit of critical thinking.
4. To appreciate and desire worth-while activities.
5. To gain command of the common integrating knowledge and skills.
6. To develop a sound body and normal mental attitudes.⁶

A critical examination of these objectives is quite likely to lead to the conclusion that some objectives are neglected as the price of achieving

⁵ Reprinted by permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc., from *Measurement in Today's Schools*, by C. C. Ross, copyright 1941, 1947, by Prentice-Hall, Inc., p. 107.

⁶ By permission from *Introduction to American Public Education*, by Chris A. DeYoung. Copyright, 1942. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., p. 179.

others. In the above list it is not indicated that "common integrating knowledge and skills" is any more important than social relationships, cultivation of individual aptitudes, or development of good physical health and robust mental health. The periodic review of such statements is vital for maintaining balanced emphasis in seeking "well-rounded" development.

Purposes of Kindergarten Education. Educational leaders at all levels, whether preschool, elementary, or secondary, seem to grant similar items a place of importance in terms of objectives. This can be learned by noting the aims of kindergarten education.

1. To train the child more readily to adapt himself to his environment.
2. To teach the child to realize that the privileges and rights he formerly had as an individual cease to be his alone, when he becomes a member of a group.
3. To teach the child to associate with those outside his family group.
4. To develop the power of self-control.
5. To provide for many children an enriched environment.⁷

Educational Policies Commission's Statement of Objectives. In 1937 the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association formulated the following category in terms of living in American Democracy:

1. The Objectives of Self-realization
2. The Objectives of Human Relationship
3. The Objectives of Economic Efficiency
4. The Objectives of Civic Responsibility.⁸

Using Educational Objectives. It is not enough to read such lists as the foregoing and to let it go at that. Even memorizing them does not necessarily lead to putting them into practice. Each individual teacher should periodically review the various sets of objectives, to see what could be done in his own class or subject by way of making any particular item function. The objectives can serve as a sort of check list of effectiveness. No marked or sudden improvement can normally be expected; but gradual improvement is made more probable. The duties of the classroom teacher are exacting, tedious, difficult, and frequently exasperating; but those who devote time and energy to improving their work will in-

⁷ *The Articulation of the Units of American Education*, Seventh Yearbook of National Education Association, American Association of School Administrators, Washington, D.C., 1929, p. 69. By permission of the American Association of School Administrators.

⁸ Educational Policies Commission, *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy*, Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1938, pp. 50, 72, 90, and 108. By permission of the Educational Policies Commission.

evitably gain the reward of inner satisfaction that comes from seeing their pupils grow steadily and symmetrically.

Detailed study of educational objectives can serve as the center of profitable professional meetings. If regular staff meetings are held in your school, it will be pertinent to devote some of them to a discussion of the general statements of objectives. An attempt should be made to interpret these in ever more specific terms. As each teacher tells what he thinks can be done to implement the objectives, others will see additional avenues for making the objectives function.

The author recently took part in a school-wide workshop, for five days, in which both elementary and high-school teachers studied the objectives stated by the Educational Policies Commission. Committees were organized to deal with a limited number of items under each of the four heads. Reports were made to the entire group. At the end of the workshop, such remarks as the following were made: "I've gained many ideas that I will begin using immediately." "These objectives are really challenging." "I have a better appreciation of the work of high-school teachers." "I've overlooked a bit—my colleagues have a lot of valuable ideas." A beginning teacher said, "I just finished studying these objectives at college. Now I see them in an entirely different light." The author was especially gratified about this one: "Mental hygiene has long been a major interest. It is helpful to see how it can operate in daily class activities." At a later time, the principal reported that the meetings had served to make the shop and agriculture teachers more aware of the nonvocational aspects of their specialties.

CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF EXISTING ASSETS

It would be desirable to have in each school a guidance clinic staffed by trained specialists whose function it is to help teachers in the solution of their problems. The number of such clinics is increasing, but the vast majority of schools do not have such services. Even where these are available, it is necessary for the teacher to appreciate the resources to be used for helping children because he will, in the final analysis, be called on to carry out the recommendations of the specialists. Such resources as are mentioned in this section are readily available in many schools which do not have clinics.

Teachers. Other teachers in the school system or the building are resources for working with pupils. Teachers differ in their interests and talents. Each individual seems to establish interpersonal bonds with some kinds of persons better than with others. Here, for instance, is a high-school English teacher who is also interested in the subject of biology and has an affinity for shy individuals. She did exceptional individual work with an overage, but bright, high-school pupil who was interested in

becoming an engineer. This same boy did not appeal to the coach, because he was neither interested in the school teams nor eligible for them. Here is a mature sixth-grade teacher who is warmhearted and good-natured toward aggressive, loudmouthed, preadolescents. She is fully aware of what acceptable behavior is, and these rough, tough boys come to her for private talks in which she asks them questions and laughs with them so that they arrive at a better understanding of how they look to their classmates. She realizes that their aggressive behavior is often a cover for tensions they can hardly recognize.

Here is another teacher, who was herself a product of a broken home. She is not a maudlin sympathy giver, but she is exceedingly well qualified to deal intelligently with those pupils at all grade levels whose difficulties seem to grow out of a feeling of insecurity generated by their broken homes. Here is a man teacher who is deeply interested in both boys and science. He helps many pupils come closer to full realization of their capacities by recognizing and broadening their interest in natural phenomena. After school and on holidays, he and some boys can frequently be found in the science laboratory, making their own investigations and preparing demonstrations and displays to be used for later classes.

Such teachers, through their unique interests and personality appeals, can often help other teachers reach particular boys and girls. You may have difficulty in reaching one of your pupils, but if you will call upon such teachers for assistance, they can help to solve the difficulty you are encountering. An interest on the part of some pupil can be expanded in much the same way that a tension generated in a specific class will irradiate into other phases of the pupil's work. The English teacher mentioned above influenced two shy pupils (in one school year) to take a more active and aggressive part in other classes than her own. The sixth-grade teacher was able to influence the conduct of "toughies" to such an extent that other teachers found them less obnoxious in situations not involving her guidance. The teacher who was interested in boys and science is given credit, by the local juvenile officer, for averting many cases of delinquent behavior in the community.

The handicap to using teachers as resources for mental health rests largely within ourselves. Instead of trying to conceal our own inability to cope with a given situation by criticizing the teacher whose approach is different, we need to develop the magnanimous attitude of acknowledging that each teacher in her particular way can make a special contribution to pupil growth. This advantageous use of teacher resources also involves knowing fellow staff members. As we listen to their accounts of the day's work, we can get some idea regarding their orientation toward pupils and their problems, and find out how their view can be used to the greater advantage. Our social contacts with colleagues will help us

to develop a knowledge of their interests and hobbies that they are often most willing to turn to the advantage of pupil growth.

What we want, then, is a school where the grown-ups have a belief in the potential worth of one another, where grown-ups rely upon individual and group intelligence in the solution of problems. In a school where many people contribute to a group solution of problems, teachers have a feeling not only of their own worth but of the worth of the other fellow. The teacher next door is not someone to keep from finding out about "my latest trick in teaching long division," but is someone with whom to discuss the new procedure in the event that it may help him or that he may improve upon it.⁹

Pupils. That pupils themselves are a resource for the better adjustment of others is all too frequently overlooked. It is necessary to dispel the notion that children are naturally crude and cruel. Certainly, instances of teasing seem to indicate that children enjoy the suffering of others. But instead of being the outcome of some innate depravity, this conduct is more likely to be due to lack of experience and thoughtfulness or to the leadership of some particular youngster who is in need of help and understanding. A little guidance by the teacher will do much toward changing the orientation of thoughtless pupils and converting their actions into constructive help.

A teacher who anticipated some difficulty for a dark-skinned Mexican child in a school where all the other youngsters were white devised a unit on Mexico, its culture and its role in world economy. But she went further; when the Mexican boy was out of the room she led a discussion on how her pupils might absorb him into their group. The answers came largely from the class members and the actions which followed were highly gratifying. The youngsters "fell all over themselves" to be friendly. There seemed to be, for a time, a danger that they would spoil the new-comer. But he was soon an integral part of the group in an atmosphere of normal friendliness. There might not have been any difficulty; but because a deviant is often distrusted, the concern of the teacher seems to have been justified. It should be noted that the friendly good will of the pupils not only made the Mexican's adjustment simpler but brought them the benefit of practical experience in human relationships that would help them to a better personal adjustment in their own lives.

Youngsters can be useful in bringing supplementary materials to school which will serve to make formal learnings more concrete and personal. A unit on Japan was enlivened by the pupils' bringing in trinkets, war

⁹ *Toward Better Teaching*, 1949 Yearbook of National Education Association, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C., 1949, p. 261. By permission of the American Association of School Administrators.

souvenirs, and *National Geographic* magazines. Often the pupils' own experiences can be advantageously turned to account—their travels, the stories an uncle has told about his adventures, films that they have seen, and stories that they have read.

Pupils can be potent factors in creating a congenial atmosphere in the school as a whole. One list of the ways pupils may become resources indicates the following areas of activity: (1) the creation of a "check-up" committee to see that the library is kept neat and free of litter; (2) the establishment of a "luncheon club," whose function is to make lunches pleasant and congenial; (3) making students responsible for helping those who have been absent to catch up with their work—thus warding off the discouragement that is a forerunner of uninspired work; (4) pupil participation in the planning and conducting of field trips; (5) formation of a courtesy committee whose duty it is to help visitors find what they want and be made to feel welcome; (6) discussion of the substitute-teacher problem and the formation of a committee to plan a procedure whereby the substitute's dilemma would be mitigated; (7) control and responsibility for safety in the classroom, corridors, playground, and adjacent streets.¹⁰

Teachers are daily discovering that youth hold tremendous resources for the solution of all kinds of problems. When given a chance, they assume responsibilities that surprise even the most experienced. In educational periodicals there are many short accounts of such activities, but the book by Paul R. Hanna, *Youth Serves the Community*,¹¹ describes numerous instances in which youth accomplished much in realizing their own potentialities as well as improving their communities. Teachers who would give young people purposes which will serve to direct their energies into constructive channels must first develop a trust in their sincerity, energy, and intelligence. Wise use of the resource will develop it more fully.

The Manual Arts Laboratory. Even in small schools there are specialists who can do much to promote wholesome pupil growth—the athletic coach, the home-economics teacher, the librarian (if it is a central library), and the music teacher. An instance of what these specialists can accomplish is found in an account of a manual arts teacher's work toward the achievement of better mental health for his pupils.

This teacher had, through the years, become increasingly sensitive about other teachers' attitudes toward his shop. It seemed to him that they were continually sending him slow-learning boys who could not

¹⁰ Paul R. Mort and William S. Vincent, *Modern Educational Practice*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1950, pp. 149-153.

¹¹ Paul R. Hanna and Research Staff of the Works Progress Administration, *Youth Serves the Community*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1936.

make the grade in academic work. Some bright lads were taking a good deal of work in manual arts, but they were ones who had caused trouble of various kinds and were sent to him as a way to be rid of them in the classroom. When he was taking a graduate course in education, it was pointed out to him by the instructor and by fellow class members that he might well accept the situation as a challenge—a challenge to do something really constructive for the boys who were sent to him. This he readily decided to do, because he recalled, on reflection, that he had materially helped a few of the boys who had been working with him.

He stopped trying to produce works of art in the shop. He gave up trying to maintain rigid classroom discipline. Instead, he treated his shop as a place where boys could work off their tensions. He gave direction in the development of manual skills as boys indicated their interest. He talked with the boys informally whenever they were willing. At all times he was friendly. In an atmosphere of freedom and fellowship, the lads began to take an interest in productive workmanship. They felt that they could confide in their instructor because their tales went no further. The instructor did not refer problem cases to higher authority.

Under these conditions, the boys began to have a pride in what they could produce. They took good care of that part of the school which they liked, so the shop was kept neat in appearance and was systematically run by the boys themselves. But this was not the total result. As the instructor became familiar with the stories of the boys, he helped them to develop more constructive attitudes. He showed them that their accomplishment could be duplicated in other areas of activity. He further helped by conferring with other teachers about particular pupils—dropping hints as to how they could be helped: Johnny needs lots of praise. Frank needs to receive stern challenges. Bill enjoys having a position of leadership and will carry his responsibilities well. Jimmy will take orders if they are firmly given. He had attained the understanding on which these hints were based through the individual study of each boy. He talked with them a great deal and did even more listening. In short, after a year during which the mental hygiene viewpoint was uppermost in his mind, many boys were being helped rather than by-passed. Teachers continued to send troublemakers to shop classes, but their attitude was different. Instead of trying to get rid of the disturbing individuals, they now had the feeling that something could be done for these boys.

The concreteness of the end products of the manual arts shop and the opportunity for physical movement probably contributed to the effectiveness of the situation in the foregoing report. Most of all, it depended on the teacher's orientation. Much the same thing has been done by others in connection with music, home economics, and athletics.

Home Economics. Homemaking activities in the school deserve consideration from the mental hygiene, as well as from a practical, viewpoint. It was a home-economics teacher, for instance, who solved the problem of an overlarge girl who was not even in this teacher's classes. Shortly after entering the ninth grade, this girl became known to teachers and pupils as a rough talker and a fighter. Her violence toward boys actually frightened some teachers. Many of the others wanted to help, but it was the home-economics teacher who, by speaking to her casually in the halls, finally got her to talk. It developed that she felt ashamed of her clothes and her appearance and took it out on pupils who dared to tease her. Used clothes donated through the P.T.A. were made over in the home-economics classes. The girl was fitted out with garments that were suitable for her age, size, and coloring. She was given some specific information about skin care and hair dressing. The outcome might seem magical to those who are unaware of the importance of physical appearance to the adolescent. The girl's conduct became friendly and ladylike. Her mental superiority showed itself in her marked leadership in academic studies. It was the consensus of teachers that they had a new girl in their classes. Incidentally, it should be mentioned that the drive for clothes also resulted in other pupils being better dressed—both at the elementary- and the high-school level. Moreover, the home-economics classes had found a meaningful project which increased interest in learning activities.

EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES

Reading for Mental Health. Teachers have long felt that in the teaching of reading emphasis on the mechanical skill of reading should be shared by emphasis on the development of good taste in selection. All too often the matter of taste was left to the individual judgment of the teacher, who was likely to feel that his coverage of appropriate books for all age levels was too limited. Concrete, specific, and detailed help in the matter of selection has come from the American Council on Education. The committee which studied the problem emphasized the aspect of human relations, but their statement fits the mental hygiene viewpoint quite well. "Biography, fiction, and drama offer readers an opportunity to identify emotionally with human beings who are in interaction with their fellows. They provide access to the feelings of other people in a way otherwise offered only by face-to-face contacts."¹²

Sociometry and Pupil Adjustment. An experimental approach which is frequently used by teachers to improve understanding of pupil rela-

¹² American Council on Education, *Reading Ladders for Human Relations*, revised and enlarged edition, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1949, p. 1. By permission of the publisher.

tions, and thus provide clues for better adjustment, is that known as sociometry. "Stated briefly, sociometry may be described as a means of presenting simply and graphically the entire structure of relations existing at a given time among members of a given group. The major lines of communication, or the pattern of attraction and rejection in its full scope, are made readily comprehensible at a glance."¹³ The graphic representation of these "lines of communication" is the sociogram. It is based upon the administration of a questionnaire. The items on the questionnaire may be designed by individual teachers for the specific purpose which each has in mind, but typical questions often are similar to the following: Whom do you consider to be your best friend? Which of the students in the room would you like to have as your best friend? If all the pupils were to work in pairs on a mural, whom would you select? Who would be the best chairman of a panel discussion in social studies? For whom would you vote as class president? Who would be the best substitute in the absence of the teacher for a short period of time? Frequently, students are asked to give both a first and second choice. In a typical situation one student will be chosen by a number of his classmates, while one will receive no choices in response to a given question—sometimes no choice on all the questions. Results are then tabulated for each question. A solid line may indicate a first choice and a broken line, a second choice. Girls are represented by circles and boys by squares in the illustrative sociogram (Fig. 4). Individuals are identified by initials within the box or square. The relative isolation or popularity of individuals is indicated by the cluster of directional lines.

Examination of the sociogram quickly and realistically shows how well a pupil is absorbed within the group. It tends to show the areas (depending on the type of question on which the sociogram is constructed) of strengths or weaknesses of a student in regard to his social adjustment. The objective of the sociogram is to group, or regroup, pupils so that the expressed choices of pupils are put into effect. An underchosen child should be placed with his own first choice, if possible, and mutual choices should be respected. "Among the many teachers who have used sociometric choices and continued their arrangements over a period of time, none have reported more than temporary disturbances, and all have found their classroom atmosphere and working morale have increased markedly."¹⁴ This reshaping of groups according to pupils' choices helps them to find security in the roles which others recognize as their areas of competence. The sociogram is of value in that it reflects the values of pupils, which may at times differ from those reflecting the view-

¹³ American Council on Education, *Sociometry in Group Relations*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1948, p. 11. By permission of the publisher.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 47. By permission of the publisher.

point of the teacher. That is, teachers are sometimes surprised when the sociogram shows a particular individual to be relatively isolated, in spite of his recognized abilities. Sociometric study has shown the need for regrouping pupils in such situations as playground activities, seating in the cafeteria, control of traffic, classroom organization, or membership in

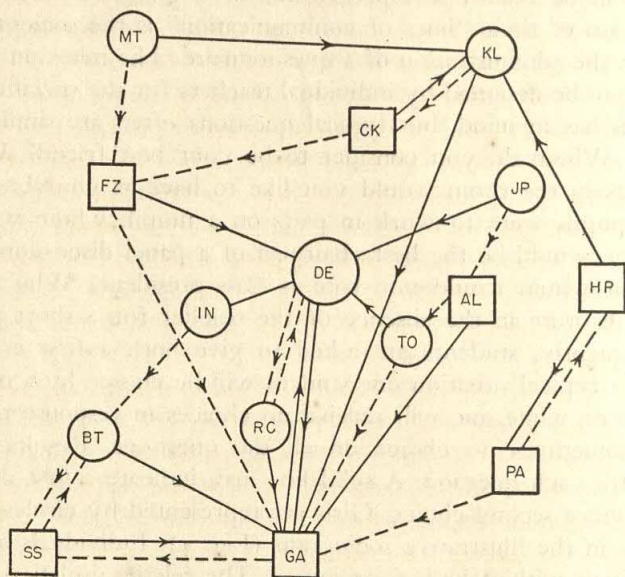


Fig. 4. Sociogram based on responses to "Who would be the best substitute in the absence of the teacher? DE (girl) and GA (boy) are mutual first choices; DE and RC are mutual second choices. GA was a first choice of two boys and four girls; DE was a first choice of two boys and three girls; KL was a first choice of two boys and one girl, etc. In the matter of second choice, there is more variation but clustering (known as "stars") is still evident. MT and JP are neither first nor second choices of any individual and consequently on this question are known as "isolates."

clubs. Several schools have discovered, for instance, that there is not enough opportunity for boys and girls to know one another. The value of such a study of grouping, and regrouping as conditions change, is reflected in the following words: "Only as children participate as active agents will they ever become aware of what group procedures can mean. The great significance of sociometric methods, at this point, lies in the opportunity they afford teachers to create a predisposition for active give and take."¹⁵

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 82. By permission of the publisher.

This is an experiment which teachers can easily conduct themselves. They have simply to devise some question that will lead pupils to choose persons with whom they would like to associate in specified activities. They can then draw the graphic representation of these choices and group the pupils (compromising, when necessary) in accordance with indicated lines. Later the questionnaire can be resubmitted and another sociogram be drawn, for the study and evaluation of results. However, the final evaluation will be in terms of overtly observable behaviors.

Classes in Human Relations. Many of the suggestions given in this book for improved mental health are in terms of the teacher's improving environmental circumstances. An approach which has deservedly gained much attention is the direct attack on the personal problems of pupils. It partakes of the nature of a public confession and results in improved adjustment for several reasons. Outstanding among these reasons is that (1) it provides release from continuing pressures and (2) it shows the pupil that he is quite like others in the feelings he has, thus adding to his sense of security.

This direct approach was crystallized into a classroom technique by H. Edmund Bullis and his coworker, Emily E. O'Malley.¹⁶ The purpose of the study was to go beyond the philosophizing stage of mental hygiene and work directly with students on some of the daily living problems which they meet and which, when remaining unsolved, may cause serious maladjustment, at worst, or unnecessary unhappiness, at best. The whole study was to emphasize the important topic of "How to live." This was to be accomplished by studying how to accept oneself, to accept others, to make decisions, to meet failure, to make compromises, and the like.

The technique for carrying this out is simple, economical in time, and productive of better adjustment. The teacher roughly outlines some ordinary situation of everyday human relationships, pupils are invited to participate in an orderly discussion of it, and then a story is read. Next, the pupils are asked to mention some of the outstanding behavior of the story character. When they have developed ease in this participation, they are asked to describe people or situations which they know of personally and which are similar to those in the story. Gradually, as the lessons progress, the pupils are asked if they have ever had similar feelings themselves. Typically, one or two of the pupils volunteer and then others begin to bare their own previously hidden feelings. There are various approaches to the outlining of a situation. Sometimes the problem is introduced by the pupils' being asked to write on a particular topic. A panel discussion may be used, a play may be produced, or a

¹⁶ H. Edmund Bullis and Emily E. O'Malley, *Human Relations in the Classroom*, Course I, Wilmington, Del.: The Delaware State Society for Mental Hygiene, 1947.

subject may be debated. But whatever the approach, the purpose is to convey the idea that one's problems are not unique and that thus one may, without shame, admit defective behaviors and propose solutions.

Psychiatrists have observed such classes and concluded that (1) pupils learn to regard their personal problems as common experiences, (2) they tend to objectify rather than to repress their feelings, (3) they learn to examine their own lives and achieve improved self-understanding, and (4) they arrive at a better understanding of the role of emotions in their lives. Bullis states that the advantages of this approach to better adjustment are that (1) experts are not required—teachers can and do perform the job efficiently, (2) the lessons need not interfere with the regular curriculum—they can advantageously be a part of other courses, (3) teachers gain helpful insights which improve their teaching, (4) reticent pupils are often encouraged to participate, (5) students enjoy the human-relations classes, and (6) teachers achieve a better understanding of the unique personalities with which they deal.¹⁷

There are thirty lessons in Course I of *Human Relations in the Classroom*. The lessons include such representative topics as the following: "How Emotions Affect Us Physically," "Our Inner Human Drives," "Overcoming Personal Handicaps," "Losing Gracefully," "That Inferiority Feeling," and "Importance of Hobbies." Although the introductory stories for these topics are designed for pupils at the junior-high-school level, with a little ingenuity the teacher can find similar material for the preceding grades or for the senior-high-school level. The prime requisite, as is the case with any successful technique in teaching or for mental hygiene, is a teacher who has enthusiasm for his work and faith in the ability of his pupils to solve their own problems under guidance.

Colonel Bullis evaluates the experiment in human relations as follows:

I realize that these human relations classes are no panacea for the serious problems we are facing today. . . .

If the best brains in the teaching and other professions could be focussed on this problem of helping more of our children become emotionally mature during their school days, we would find in our next generation much more understanding and stable parents, better able to bring up their children to face the ever-changing problems of our present civilization.¹⁸

. . . One can not master algebra in thirty short lessons; consequently, it can not be expected that one can master the much more complicated and difficult problem of adjusting to life in this short period. To learn to live with ourselves is an art. To learn to get along well with others is an art. To become proficient in these two arts means that we must start very early

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15. By permission of the author.

in life, have understanding parents, friends and teachers to guide us in these arts, and we must practice patiently and persistently year after year in order that we may develop the type of personality that will make us well liked by others and happy in our human relationships.¹⁹

As is the case with other constructive approaches, this technique capitalizes on resources which are already available. It but remains for the teacher to make clear his objectives in working with his pupils and to realize that some experimentation on his part will greatly add to his own personal satisfaction in his work.

SUMMARY

It would be desirable to have clinical assistance and trained personnel for aiding pupils to make better adjustments to school and life situations. But existing conditions are short of the ideal. It remains for teachers to make the best use of available facilities and assets if many pupils who need help are to get any assistance whatever. The starting point will be for teachers to understand the pervasiveness of the mental hygiene viewpoint and to use wisely whatever facilities are already available. Clinical assistance may well be the next step, but something can be done at once.

School marks can be used more constructively. Instead of representing some vague degree of mastery, marks should be (1) checks on teacher effectiveness, (2) devices for evaluating educational philosophy, (3) means to more effective guidance, (4) means for informing all concerned about pupil growth, and (5) sources of background information for later guidance. Anecdotal records can serve to give present teachers, and teachers to be encountered later, insight into the characteristics of pupils. Case studies are particularly useful because the data assembled often present clues for improved treatment of individuals. Case studies will be especially constructive if the data are reviewed and evaluated by small groups of teachers or by teachers and other available specialized personnel. Standardized test data are often not used constructively. It must be remembered that test data are samples of behavior and furnish clues rather than conclusions.

Periodic reviews of educational objectives will help the teacher to check the value of the various activities carried on in the classroom. Examination of published objectives will frequently reveal somewhat too much concern with abstract learnings and a neglect of emphasis on personality development and learning how to live. Both the tyro and the experienced teacher will profit from critical examination of his work in terms of contemporary statements about the purposes of education.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 217. By permission of the author.

Many existing assets for mental health in the school are frequently overlooked as possible assets for better personal adjustment. For instance, fellow teachers, with their unique interests and experiential and educational backgrounds, can give you substantial assistance with pupils who are causing you bewilderment. It is no reflection on your own ability that others may be able to succeed where you have been baffled, just as you can easily solve difficulties before which others have failed. Giving each other a chance to help is the prime requisite. Similarly, pupils can aid each other—again, *if they are given a chance*. The foremost consideration is to put into practice the democratic ideals which we profess. The manual arts shop, the art room, athletic activities, homemaking activities, and the like have proved to be highly constructive approaches to the solution of the problems of particular pupils. These activities are of value for many reasons, among which one of the most outstanding is that they afford opportunities for success in areas other than the academic.

Experimental approaches, readily available to ordinary classroom teachers, have proved to be effective in improving mental health. One of these is the selection of books which are appropriate to specified age levels and types of problems. The adjustment of pupils is improved through their seeing their own problems from a more impersonal point of view, *i.e.*, in the experiences of others. Their adjustment is also made easier by their realizing that others have experienced the same kinds of feelings that are bothering them. Classes in human relations accomplish much the same result, except that the attack is more direct. In these classes the pupils start with a more or less abstract situation, but quickly get down to cases—their own cases.

None of these constructive approaches requires specialized training, though additional study will be helpful. All that is necessary is for the classroom teacher to analyze the basic purposes of his job and seek to perform that job more effectively. The result will be improved mental health for both the pupil and the teacher.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. What are some basic human needs that might be satisfied through a more constructive use of school marks?
2. Exchange views with members of the class relative to the feelings that have been aroused in them by grades.
3. Observe some class member, in and out of class, and make two or three anecdotal observations which convey a representative view of him.
4. Try to obtain from some school files a detailed case study of an individual. Read it in class and have the class members suggest additional questions or proposed solutions.
5. What kinds of test data do you think would constitute a minimum for primary pupils? For elementary pupils? For high-school pupils?

6. What other uses of test data are there besides those listed in the chapter?
7. Take one of the subheads of any of the four objectives stated by the Educational Policies Commission and elaborate it in class discussion.
8. Describe some teacher you have known who was a positive influence for mental health.
9. Have some experienced teacher tell how he has used pupils as a resource for more effective study.
10. Why does a manual arts shop provide unique opportunities for better pupil adjustment?
11. What other ordinary school facilities might be listed as assets in a school which has a mental hygiene viewpoint?
12. Have some class member who has read a book listed in *Reading Ladders for Human Relations* tell how it might be used to improve personal adjustment.
13. Read in class one of the stories in *Human Relations in the Classroom* and use it as the basis for a discussion of the personal feelings of adults.

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

BULLIS, H. EDMUND, and EMILY E. O'MALLEY, *Human Relations in the Classroom*, Course I, Wilmington, Del.: The Delaware State Society for Mental Hygiene, 1947. 222 pp.

This volume contains specific suggestions for helping junior-high-school pupils to see their personal problems in perspective. Background material is followed by thirty lessons, of which a story illustrating a particular problem is a major part.

JENNINGS, HELEN HALL, *Sociometry in Group Relations*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1948. 86 pp.

This booklet contains, in brief scope, the theory and application of sociometry as a technique for understanding and helping individual children with their interpersonal relations. Numerous illustrative sociograms are included in the publication.

Staff of Intergroup Education in Cooperating Schools, *Reading Ladders for Human Relations*, revised and enlarged edition, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1949. 115 pp.

This booklet contains suggestions for the more effective use of children's and youth's literature in forming attitudes. Background suggestions are followed by chapters dealing with eight broad areas of human relations. Each chapter contains lists of books appropriate for pupils of various ages. Some of the titles are annotated.

WRINKLE, WILLIAM L., *Improving Marking and Reporting Practices in Elementary and Secondary Schools*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1947. 120 pp.

After a discussion of some of the fallacies inherent in conventional marking and reporting practices, the writer summarizes the findings of ten years of study directed toward improvement. He admits that not all the questions are solved and asks teachers to continue to seek improvement.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Counseling—Its Tools and Techniques, Carl F. Mahnke Productions, 215 East Third St., Des Moines 9, Iowa. (20 min, BW&C, sd.)

Shows guidance at work in the secondary school. Deals with such things as the counselor's preparation, establishing rapport, studying problems, and planning a course of action with the individual.

Developing Leadership, Coronet Films, Inc., 65 East South Water, Chicago 1. (10 min, BW&C, sd.)

Demonstrates the qualifications needed for leadership. It shows how small groups of young people assume responsibility for helping some other children who are victims of a flood.

Pop Rings the Bell, National School Service Institute, Palmer House, Chicago. (20 min, BW, sd.)

Indicates the reasons why the modern school needs better equipment, well-trained teachers, and adequate support from the community. A dramatic presentation of some contemporary school problems.

Using the Classroom Film, Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., 342 Madison Ave., New York. (22 min, BW, sd.)

A junior-high-school class raises some problems that can be approached through the use of a film. Shows how the instructor first previews the film, goes over the study guide, and formulates some questions.

PART THREE

SPECIAL APPROACHES TO MENTAL
HEALTH

13

ART AS AN APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH

THE WIDE prevalence of mental ill-health in contemporary society makes it important that those who work with young people should use every means available to understand and help growing children. Because of the *intricate* make-up of human personality, it is improbable that any simple answers will be found for developing effectively adjustive individuals. The multiplicity of human needs and their varying strengths in different persons make it clear that the use of a particular technique must be adapted to the particular person, time, and circumstance. But in spite of these handicaps, some promising new developments are coming to the fore to aid in improving child development. One of these important innovations is the use of art as a means of getting to know children and being able to assist them.

It has been previously indicated that humans have certain fundamental needs and that if they are not met—or on the way to being met—frustration, maladjustment, and socially unacceptable behavior will be the consequence. Several of these needs can be satisfied—at least, partially—through various art activities. For example, the fulfillment of the need to manipulate, the need to satisfy curiosity, the need to achieve, the need to be independent, and the need for activity can be facilitated through art mediums. Study of the use of art in more effective education thus assumes an important place in the program which the teacher devises for better mental health. Fortunately, the techniques are simple enough to make it possible for every teacher, including those with limited art education, to use them effectively. It is a matter of understanding and applying such basic principles as are briefly indicated in this chapter.¹

ART AND PUPIL DEVELOPMENT

The Meaning of Art. While we cannot go so far as to say that art means anything you want it to mean, it is certainly true that widely

¹Further study is highly recommended, using such references as appear in the footnotes and in the bibliography at the end of the chapter.

varying definitions offer a choice. Thomas Munro states that "art" is a name given to many different kinds of human products and activities, and then he proceeds to distinguish among twenty-two different meanings.² Without getting into theoretical and technical disputes, we can—from the standpoint of mental hygiene—say that art refers to a kind of behavior, a way of doing, in which creative imagination is channeled into constructive areas. The definition of Leon L. Winslow may be endorsed, from the standpoint of mental hygiene in the school.

Art as a school subject may be defined briefly as an organized body of educational experience dealing with the meeting of human needs as efficiently as possible through the use of materials. Yet the subject of art is much more than a curriculum area dealing with materials and processes, for it embraces experiences with information and with feelings as well as with activity.³

Some recent changes in the meaning and significance of art are important to understand because the older concepts have not been completely outgrown. The Greeks included fine arts in their curriculum but were careful to distinguish them from the practical, or industrial, arts. As art appeared in the curriculum in subsequent centuries the emphasis was on "art for art's sake," rather than on art for more complete living. This view has significance today because it represents a partial handicap to acceptance of the contemporary view. The emphasis was on production and a degree of creativeness which few could expect to attain, as is seen in the following passage:

The theory of Art for Art's Sake emphasizes art as a product for its own sake with no utilitarian, social, or moral purpose. Its advocates adhere rigidly, as did their teachers, to a narrow range of definite rules, technical skills, and historical facts held by their particular group. The different groups that continue to follow Art for Art's Sake disagree as to what procedures and what points of emphasis they advocate, but they do agree that art is a subject by itself and that the creation of beautiful forms is cultural activity for its own sake. . . . In most cases picture-study lessons have been more or less arbitrarily developed and frozen into an accepted pattern. The pictures used are not only unrelated to the interests of children, but often unrelated also to any aspect of life today.⁴

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the beginnings of definite change were made, although Comenius (1592–1670) had advocated paint-

² Thomas Munro, *The Arts and Their Interrelations*, New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1949, pp. 49–107.

³ By permission from *Art in Elementary Education* by Leon L. Winslow. Copyright, 1942. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., p. 4.

⁴ Robert S. Hilpert in *Art in American Life and Education*, 40th Yearbook of National Society for the Study of Education, Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Ill., 1941, pp. 448–449. Quoted by permission of the Society.

ing as one means of developing the child's internal self. Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Froebel were the forerunners of the contemporary concept that art has a place in the curriculum because of its appropriateness for stimulating harmonious child development. However, Walter Beck⁵ takes the view that Pestalozzi's and Froebel's idea of art was too formalized, too strictly related to geometry. The newer concept, as it has been developed up to now, emphasizes capitalizing on *every* individual's capacity for creativeness, however limited it may be. It holds firmly to the principle that art demands freedom, whether the medium be dancing, painting, modeling, music, drama, or creative writing. The primary objective is personal self-expression which will satisfy the needs for accomplishment, freedom, exploration, and individual worth, as contrasted with superiority of achievement calling forth appreciation by others that will be known as "art." Unless these factors of individual creativeness at all levels, freedom to create what one wants, and expression of individuality are kept in mind at all times by the teacher, art as a means to better mental health for all cannot be effective.

Implications of the Changing Concept. If we are to realize the potentialities inherent in this contemporary concept, we shall have to move away from the formal programs which consisted of looking at sepia reproductions of masterpieces and being told the story of the picture and the painter. It will mean that, instead of producing pictures with proper balance of shape, location, and color made with prescribed strokes and standard instruments, *each* child's creation will be appreciated in terms of what it reveals about his motivations. Instead of emphasis on proficiency of skill in painting, modeling, and dancing, stress will be placed on the release of tensions and the expression of unique interests. Skills need not be repudiated, but they will be of secondary significance and, instead of being taught first, will be taught as there is need for them.

The newer concept offers an opportunity for the teacher to make learnings more concrete. Pupils will have a chance to handle materials and make pictures and models of some of the objects and situations which they are studying in their academic classes. Thus, in place of the highly verbalized readings and discussions which are too characteristic of the ordinary classroom, art opens an avenue to concrete, individual learnings in the form of seeing, feeling, and, above all, doing.

There is also the opportunity to develop constructive hobbies for many pupils rather than for only the few who happen to have outstanding talents for drawing, painting, dancing, and acting. Since superior creativity is not an outstanding criterion, more pupils are encouraged to exercise their freedom in creating things that are satisfactory to them.

⁵ Walter Beck, *Self-development in Drawing*, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1928, pp. 134ff.

Any experienced teacher, or parent, will have noticed how enthusiastic children are over the crude drawings they devise, the makeshift playthings they create, and even the shuffling dances they spontaneously perform. The adults will note also how easily discouraged the children become over suggestions for improvement and the offers of assistance that seem to have a critical tone. It is almost certain that adults could derive satisfactions from similar activities if the criterion uppermost in their minds were self-expression rather than recognition for superior accomplishment.

Besides these implications for children, there is another—as important as any of those mentioned above—which has to do with the teacher. This is the challenge presented to the teacher for personal growth. First, there is the opportunity to read the literature in these areas of art and education, art therapy, and child study through art activities. Although no panacea is promised for the problems of adjustment, the results to date indicate rewarding consequences. One teacher, uninitiated in the field of art, after expressing doubt as to its worth-whileness, decided to look into the technique and concluded:

I felt some doubt of its suitability since art has seemed to be so much less important than the so-called tool subjects. However, even a little research soon developed a healthy enthusiasm in the subject and the conviction that worthwhile art experiences in the school are a necessary part of the child's school life in helping him develop a wholesome personality; and important for the teacher in helping her to understand the abilities, the thinking, the personalities and the problems of her pupils.⁶

Second, there is an interesting field for personal and professional experimentation. All teachers can give their pupils freedom to draw, paint, and model what and how they choose. A teacher, in many cases, will only have to ask his administrator or supervisor for art materials and can place these freely before his pupils. He can then sit back and see what develops and ponder over what it means in the life of each individual child. He can take note of peaceful or violent scenes which are depicted, he can watch to see if the child uses materials cautiously or with abandon, he can note the roughness or care with which the child treats his finished product. He can then correlate what he sees within these art activities with what he knows about the child from school records, relationships with classmates, conversations with the parents, information gathered from other teachers, and his previous observations of the child in other activities. If then he is not too anxious to draw

⁶ Elsa H. Gillison, *The Use of the Projective Technique in Art for Primary Pupils*, unpublished master's study, Portland, Ore., Oregon State System of Higher Education, 1949, p. 6.

conclusive viewpoints from the art activities alone, he will have gained a better understanding of the child. He may, in certain instances, already have helped the child by allowing freedom of expression. Certainly the experiment will result in a different—a supplementary—view of the child which will point the way to wiser individualized treatment of him. An eighth-grade teacher summarized her work with one pupil of several whom she attempted to understand better through art as follows:

Ruby, a heavy-set girl, unattractive and untidy in appearance, has had difficulty "fitting in" with her group. Both girls and boys take pleasure in making fun of her. She is not accepted. She has a low I.Q. and cannot do much of the academic work. She has always had a great interest in art. Her ability in craft work has been greater than that in painting, although her habits of work were very careless. Last year she spent considerable time in art and craft work, and found some satisfaction in successfully completing some good projects. Her ego was further helped when much of her work was put on display, and a doll that she made was one of a group that was sent on tour to California and all through Oregon.⁷

Another phase of this personal exploration has to do with the teacher's own participation. Fuller appreciation of the potentialities inherent in art activities in the classroom will be obtained when the teacher has himself worked in the mediums of paints, clay, color, carving, and the like. He can aid his pupils in drawing a line, using a brush, pulling the clay, if he has had practice with these things himself. Such practice is widely available today in the form of evening classes, in-service training groups, and summer study. But the beginning point must be a realization of the potentialities, so the teacher will avail himself of the opportunities with enthusiasm. One teacher said upon entering an art class that she hated art and her only reason for being there was that she was required to earn two hours' credit in the field; but at the end of the term she thanked the art teacher for the most enjoyable experience she had had for some time. It is interesting to note, because it has some implications for effective teaching, that this teacher attributed her dislike for art to the remark made by one of her early teachers when she was trying to draw a potato, "That potato looks like a barn." Moreover, it should be stated that, quite apart from increased efficiency in teaching, it may be possible to find in art a new interest for the expansion of one's personal life.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Art as a Supplementary Activity. One of the basic principles of mental health is that a full and happy life demands the exercise of one's *various*

⁷ Janet C. Smith, *Art and Therapy*, unpublished master's study, Portland, Ore., Oregon State System of Higher Education, 1950, p. 27.

capacities. Since individuals differ in both the kind and the amount of talents and propensities they possess, it is obvious that a uniform curriculum for all children is not going to afford youngsters equal chances to exercise their capacities. It is precisely at this point that art can be highly valuable; *i.e.*, it provides an area of activity supplementary to the academic program that will give children a chance to do and accomplish something which otherwise might be wanting. With such variety of activities, working directly with one's hands—using carpenter's tools, sewing equipment, a paintbrush, and the like—there is a likelihood that more children will find something to do that is interesting and meaningful.

Because of this wholeness of artistic activity, because the entire personality comes into play, artistic activity which is art itself is not an indulgence but is refreshing and restorative, as is always the wholeness that is health. There is no inherent difference between fullness of activity and artistic activity; the latter is one with being fully alive. Hence, it is not something possessed by a few persons and setting them apart from the rest of mankind, but is the normal or natural human heritage. Its spontaneity is not a gush, but is the naturalness proper to all organized energies of the live creature. Persons differ greatly in their respective measures. But there is something the matter, something abnormal, when a human being is forbidden by external conditions from engaging in that fullness according to his own measure, and when he finds it diverted by these conditions into unhealthy physical excitement and appetitive indulgence.⁸

Art can also be supplementary to the usual school program by way of illustrating and making definite the program devoted to the tool subjects. Thus, in one classroom, the writer saw arithmetic carried beyond the realm of abstract numbers by a teacher who encouraged her pupils to build models of hour glasses, construct (and use) an abacus, build a sundial, and make various three-dimensional shapes out of cardboard. The pupils, in addition to the fun of creating, had the advantage of seeing and feeling, rather than just hearing and reading. They did the latter, too, because the teacher encouraged their making reports which were illustrated with the objects constructed, but which had back of them the research needed for understanding the things that the class had made.

Art as a supplement to the academic program and as a means of exercising more talents of more children are not disparate considerations. As the teacher uses art to vivify his academic program, he is also opening a way for those who are slow in other phases of classwork to gain satis-

⁸ John Dewey, "Foreword" in Henry Schaeffer-Simmern, *The Unfolding of Artistic Activity*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1948, p. x. By permission of the publisher.

factions. Thus, a sixth-grade teacher utilized a mural to clarify the pupils' study of geography. The project was carefully planned beforehand by the group as a whole and then by the smaller groups. The chalk board was roughly divided off into small sections, and two or three youngsters were made responsible for filling each separate section of the mural. There was overlapping between the sections, as sky met sky and field met hilly country. Pictures of mountains, villages, streams, farms, roads, and ships and airplanes were placed on the mural. It was interesting to see how the pictures changed and developed as the youngsters talked and read more on the phases of the program for which they were responsible. But the most notable outcome was the behavior of a little boy, somewhat smaller than his classmates, who revealed his true age of sixteen when his mature face was observed. Previous to the mural project, this lad had been creating a disturbance in the class by smart talk and unnecessary noises. But the teacher reported that, after the mural was made a part of the classwork, he asserted himself firmly on the side of maintaining such a state of order that both his own work on the mural and that of all others in the class would progress steadily. And, according to the teacher's further report, although he was still not a leader in academic work, he was demonstrating that his retardation was not entirely due to lack of ability. Upon encountering problems dealing with his section of the mural, he was reading and computing as he never had before.

Art as a Projective Technique. The value of art as a supplementary activity is not a particularly new point of view. Art as a projective technique is a novel development that has important implications for the teacher. In general, the term *projective techniques* refers to a means whereby a more or less neutral situation is given meaning by the individual responding to it. Thus, the Rorschach blots, the pioneer projective method, are merely symmetrical but unstructured blobs of ink—such as anyone could make by placing a large drop of ink on a piece of paper and then folding the paper—which are meaningless. The subject responding to the blots tells what he sees in them, thus placing himself dominantly within the situation. Evaluation of what the subject puts into the blots is made on the basis of speed of response, movement or action, the parts to which he responds, and the effect of color on the subject's response and behavior. In short, the subject projects himself into an unstructured situation and gives it the meaning which is representative of his inner self. Other projective techniques, H. A. Murray's thematic apperception test (TAT), word-association tests, play techniques, finishing a story that the tester tells only in part, as well as finger painting and other forms of art work, operate in basically the same way; *i.e.*, the subject gives meaning to the situation and thus reveals what he himself is.

L. K. Frank defines a projective technique as "a method of studying the personality by confronting the subject with a situation to which he will respond according to what that situation means to him, and how he feels when so responding."⁹ However, the projective technique is more than a matter of studying, it is also a means of therapy. That is, as the individual projects himself into stories, dramas, and his own models and pictures, he may get rid of some of the tensions which are mounting within him. Through stories and pictures the child can make some of the things happen that he would like to have happen. He can be a hero and satisfy some basic needs that are left out of his life; he can make people suffer who are causing him pain, but he can do it in a way that will actually not hurt others. The value of projective techniques inheres largely in the fact that they reveal aspects of the personality that otherwise might continue to be concealed and continue to be painful and festering. "Since the individual learns early in life to conceal what he believes, thinks, and how he feels on many aspects of life, especially interpersonal relations, projective methods often make possible the revelation of what the subject cannot or will not say."¹⁰

Often it is not by choice that an individual (particularly a child) keeps his troubles to himself; it is a matter of his not being able to state his felt, but vague, difficulties. He is unable to put into words his thoughts and feelings. Knowing that something is bothering the child, we may ask, "What is the matter?" The answer, "I don't know" or perhaps "Nothing," is not an indication of stubbornness or lack of confidence in the questioner, but expresses an inability to put into words what is troubling him. This condition is well illustrated in the case of a nine-year-old who was not doing well in his schoolwork and had other behavior reactions indicative of some trouble. His teacher gave him colors and paper for finger painting and let him go to work. He filled the paper systematically with colors and designs, starting at the upper left-hand corner, working in lines in the same direction as writing. After he had finished, the teacher praised the color and the order and then asked him what story he was telling. With the aid of the designs and colors he was able to let out his difficulties. A certain black shape was a piano on which he was required to practice; a red, dagger-shaped object above represented a clock that slowly ticked off the required practice time. Another slender and vertical dark slash was his father telling him he was a sissy because he could not play ball as well as he should. A big yellow circle told about the day his father took him to a Coast League Baseball game.

⁹ From Lawrence K. Frank, *Projective Methods*, 1948, p. 46. Courtesy Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Springfield, Ill.

¹⁰ Carl R. Rogers, *The Clinical Treatment of the Problem Child*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1939, p. 314. By permission of the publisher.

The boy's obstructions and desires had become clearer to him as he worked with the troubles and, although he had formerly found that he could not describe his problems, he was able, with the aid of what to an uninformed observer would be meaningless blotches, to express his difficulties in words quite clearly. With her new understanding of the boy's behavior, the teacher was able to go to the parents and work out with them a plan of treatment that promised good results and hope for better adjustment of the boy.

Mental Hygiene through Art and the Teacher. An encouraging part of the theoretical aspect of art diagnosis and therapy is that the teacher does not have to be a skilled technician in order to get some values from it. (It is to be hoped, however, that art will assume a stronger place in both the general and professional education of teachers as its potentialities are appreciated.) It is necessary, of course, not to overgeneralize on the basis of insufficient data, but this does not preclude the possibility of experimenting and drawing tentative conclusions. In fact, one of the criticisms of this entire method is that too great an effort has been made to standardize and quantify the results.

Studies of projective methods, using such media as pictures, ink blots, children's drawings, children's constructions from clay, plasticene, soap, finger painting, and free play were reviewed. It became apparent that the significance to be found in these free responses to these various types of material was lost in an attempt to quantify the results, and the significance of them was to be found through a clinical interpretation of the meaning of different phases and parts of the response.¹¹

It may be that further study will result in sharpened insight that will lead to uniform interpretations; but at present there seems to be no danger in the teacher's using art for what it is worth in providing for individual differences, in encouraging varying degrees of creativeness, in allowing more pupil freedom, in vitalizing other phases of the school program, and in gathering supplementary data about the motivations of particular children. The ease with which art can be used in the classroom is illustrated by a student teacher who, in her observations before she began actual teaching, decided that she would try some of the things about which she had read, in order to stimulate her pupils to constructive activity. She ordered the materials she thought she would need—glue, paper, paints, colored chalk, cotton—and encouraged her pupils to illustrate what they were studying about in geography. Each morning, the youngsters were so anxious to get at their mural and their display table that they prepared their lesson thoroughly, in an attempt to understand

¹¹ Percival M. Symonds in J. Wayne Wrightstone (ed.), *Looking Ahead in Education*, Boston: Ginn & Company, 1945, p. 39. By permission of the publisher.

better what they were depicting. Two children who had worried the student teacher by their restlessness during previous recitations were as anxious to get into the swing of things as were the others. The pupils seemed to be unaware of the fact that they were working harder on their studies than they had before.

It should not be expected that art will pay huge dividends from the moment its use is begun. The teacher will need time, study, and practice. But many do, and more can, use it effectively.

How can the non-art teacher legitimately utilize the arts in his teaching program? . . . It is not attainable in a short time; it means work, but it pays dividends in vastly stepped-up student interest in the entire school program. It has far-reaching results in the community, the country, and in the country's international relations.¹²

ART MEDIUMS IN THE CLASSROOM

Art mediums may include any material or activity in which symmetry, rhythm, color, and form produce pleasant effects on the individual. It has already been indicated that literature, dance, drama, and personal adornment are included in the broad concept of art. However, for the sake of convenience in discussion, this section will be limited to a treatment of the graphic and plastic arts. It must be kept in mind that the mediums discussed are not so sharply differentiated in their value and use. What is said about one may also logically be said about another. Thus, advantages cited in the use of finger painting may be pertinent to the use of woodworking as well, even though the statement is not repeated in the discussion of woodworking.

Brush Painting. Brush painting gives pupils a chance to utilize colors in projecting their thoughts. The brush may be regarded as another tool for expressing the mind and the heart. Pictures have been described as thoughts projected upon a surface in an organized manner and through them, as such, the teacher gains a view of the hidden, inner self of the child. The picture will indicate the child's motivations, the colors may be used as clues to the predominating emotional pattern, and the detail will give indications of comparative maturity.¹³ Children indicate their notion of the relative significance of objects and situations in their en-

¹² Vanett Lawler, "The Arts Have Arrived in International Relations," *National Education Association Journal*, Vol. 38 (October, 1949), p. 536. By permission of the National Education Association.

¹³ Florence Goodenough has devised an intelligence test for young children, called the "Goodenough Drawing Test," which consists of drawing a man and is graded according to a standard scale, one point being awarded for each of fifty-one details enumerated. Details such as arms, fingers, clothing, etc., supply the basis for computing a mental age.

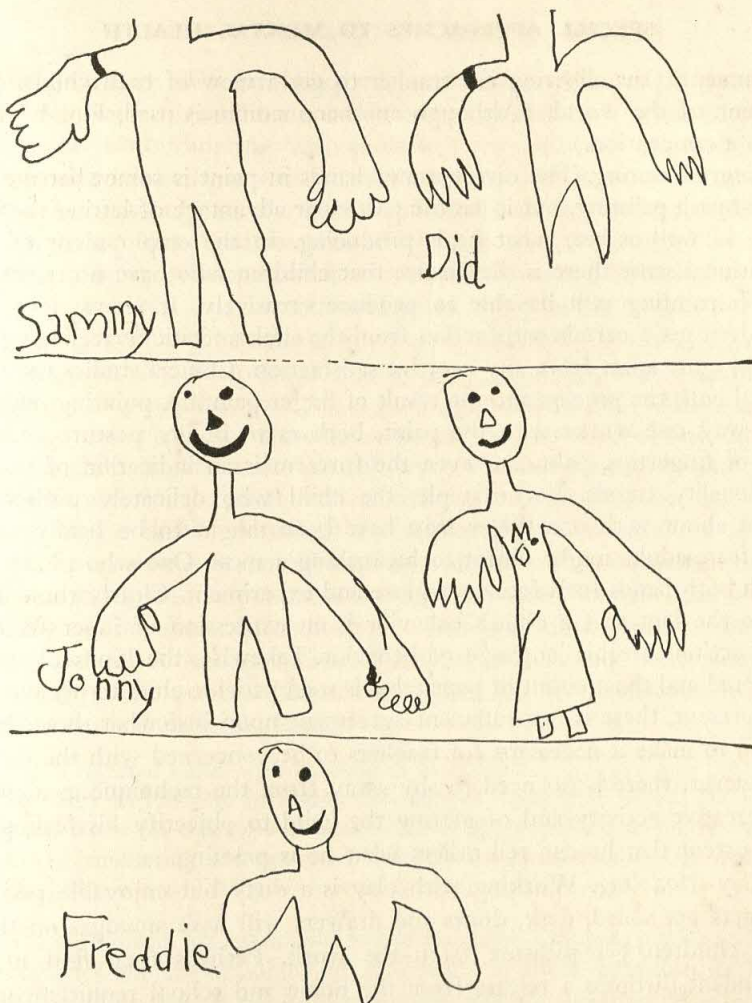


Fig. 5. A drawing used for pupil understanding. This picture was drawn at the request of a remedial reading teacher who asked, "Draw me a picture of your home, will you?" Noting the prominence of the hands in the upper figures she asked, "Where are your hands?" The answer was, "I can't, [show them] I have my coat on." The lad had a chronic case of eczema which caused feelings of inferiority and shame. The teacher worked on these feelings rather than the mechanics of reading and soon had him achieving at his expected level. One might also wonder about his feeling of acceptance in the home. His brother (Sammy) was in junior high school and was on a par with his dad (Did). His mother and his infant brother form another focal part of the family scene. Unimportant little Freddie (eight years old, in the third grade and unable to read) was by himself with an enveloping coat to hide eczema.

vironment, thus allowing the teacher to get a view of each child's conception of the world. (Although another medium is used, Fig. 5 shows such a conception.)

Finger Painting. The direct use of hands in paint is somewhat messier than brush painting, but it has the particular advantage of letting the user feel, as well as see, what he is producing. In the employment of this additional sense there is the chance that children who have no talent for brush painting will be able to produce creatively. It seems, too, that children get a certain satisfaction from the slick and sticky feeling of the paint, quite apart from any creative satisfaction. Clinical studies have detailed both the process and the result of finger painting, pointing out that the way one works with the paint, both as to bodily posture and the use of fingertips, palms, or even the forearm is an indication of certain personality trends. For example, the child who delicately pushes the paint about with one finger may have been taught to be fussily clean. He fears adults might object to his making a mess. One who plunges in with both hands feels free to explore and experiment. Clearly these illustrate the fact that a child's behavior is an expression of inner feelings. His actions are his language of behavior. Likewise, the kinds of colors selected and the amount of paper that is used provide clues to personality. At present, there is not sufficient agreement upon just what these things mean to make it necessary for teachers to be concerned with the details. However, there is no need to shy away from the technique as a means of creative activity and of getting the child to objectify his feelings to the extent that he can tell others what he is painting.

Clay Modeling. Working with clay is a dirty but enjoyable pastime. Fingers get soiled, desk, doors and drawers will have smudges on them, but children get pleasure from the work. Perhaps they find in the attendant dirtiness a release from the home and school requirements to keep clean and orderly. Clay gives a chance to correct errors, so that one may try and try again without wasting material. The physical strength required to press and pound the clay into shape affords release of emotions, as can be seen in youngsters who smack the desk loudly with a chunk of the material and strike it with their fists and elbows. Some find satisfaction in making a man (perhaps daddy or the principal) and then pounding it into a shapeless mass. There is also the matter of detail that will concern some youngsters. Some third-graders who have been observed used toothpicks to scratch eyebrows and nostrils on the animals and faces they were making. Again it may be mentioned that what is revealing is not the product or the technique, but the clues that these methods and productions offer the teacher to direct him in the search for more objective data about the child.

Woodworking. Woodworking shades from the plastic arts into craft-work, but since this medium is available in many schools, some deviation may be allowed. Working with tools will require some instruction regarding safe use and proper care of them, since defective tools are dangerous; but beyond that, the same freedom can be given children in this as in the other arts. Woodworking calls forth use of the larger muscles, which are more developed than the muscles involved in painting, and is therefore likely to give satisfactions to more pupils. Again it must be remembered that artistic production is not the sole aim. If teachers can be satisfied with the slow process of growth, practice in woodworking can pave the way for a gratifying and useful hobby. As in working with clay, the muscular exercise will be a relief for rapidly growing children who resist the relative physical inactivity of the classroom. An additional avenue for creativity is provided by making work in the shop available. Although the author does not subscribe to the theory that one who is limited in mental ability will compensate for his lack by having skill in manual activity, it can safely be said that woodworking, calling for a different kind of ability, will be another way of making opportunities for individual differences. Release from tensions generated by the out-of-school environment may be another benefit, as is shown in the following example:

Gary, a rejected child, who behaved in an aggressive manner, was provided with many experiences involving construction—mostly in wood. He had a natural talent for this type of activity, liked it, and found an emotional release in hammering and sawing. He achieved success in this area and this helped him in establishing a place for himself in his group.¹⁴

Ruth Halvorsen, art supervisor in the Portland, Oregon, public schools, recommends the art of whittling as worthy of more attention. It is an undeveloped art which youngsters engage in with eagerness. She recommends the use of balsa wood for those who have a tendency to pick at their faces and bite their nails. It gives them something soft to tear at and shape. Pine is recommended for those who like to overcome pressures and who wish to construct. Hardwood can be used for those who have lots of physical strength and like to feel the pull of their muscles as they work at creating something. This occupation has the double advantage of giving the child an opportunity to exercise his esthetic interests and to fulfill his desire for construction.

Other Mediums. The foregoing do not exhaust the possible avenues of artistic creation and exercise. Other mediums which might be used, depending upon circumstances of appropriateness and availability of material, include the following:

¹⁴ Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

- Pencil, charcoal, crayon, and chalk drawings.
- Poster drawings and paintings.
- Metal work—tin, copper, and sheet aluminum.
- Leather working and tooling.
- Making Christmas decorations of colored paper, tin cans, and papier-mâché.
- Making dolls and costumes for them.
- Walls murals and stage scenery.
- Making puppets and putting on plays with them.
- Making stencils and working with them.

Advantages similar to those discussed in the earlier part of this section are inherent in the above-listed mediums: freedom of activity, opportunity for varied accomplishment, physical activity providing for emotional catharsis, initiation of constructive leisure-time activities, carrying learnings beyond the strictly verbal stage, and opportunity for the teacher to obtain an additional viewpoint of the child.

If the use of these various mediums is to achieve the results indicated, the point that is made so frequently by the experts must be kept in mind: Free the child—do not impose adult standards. The following statement by Arne W. Randall, Specialist in Fine Arts of the U.S. Office of Education, is representative rather than unique:

Children need time, guidance, and the feeling of accomplishment to build up a sense of security in order to express what they really feel. Particularly in the early years of child growth, art is play and it should continue to be so. . . .

When the potential art abilities of children are released naturally, free of the adult standards that are stultifying to children, true creative work will develop. Through participation in works of drama, original painting, poetry, and writing, creative thinking will develop spontaneously.¹⁵

THE ROLE OF ART IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Art not only can play a vital part in the individual development of each child but, through this individual role, can serve important functions in the educational program as a whole. That is, art activities can serve to supply answers for some of the perplexing general problems of education and can implement some of the general objectives of education. These general considerations are dealt with in this section.

Developing Rapport through Art. Rapport may be defined as a relationship characterized by a feeling of harmony, accord, and belongingness. A classroom situation in which morale was high would give evidence of

¹⁵ Arne W. Randall, "Educational Trends in the Arts," *School Life*, Vol. 32 (April, 1950), p. 100.

a feeling of oneness between teacher and pupils. There would be perseverance in work habits, an acceptance of responsibility, a sharing of disappointments and successes, and a confidence that what is sought can be accomplished and is worth while. Art activities, properly directed, contribute to each of these characteristics of rapport.

Both physical and social harmony may be achieved through art activities. Physical harmony may be fostered through flower arrangements, the display of paintings (both those of the "masters" and those of pupils), and through the color and variety inherent in models, craftwork, and the dolls and puppets that are constructed. Murals which are jointly undertaken by committees of the class give an opportunity to develop social harmony through exercise in cooperative undertakings. Such joint projects call for group planning and execution, which serve to develop interpersonal accord. The variety of activities that may be introduced to the class by way of the different arts gives each child a chance to do some things in which he can be relatively successful and thus contributes to his feelings of belongingness.

A feeling of oneness between teacher and pupils is generated by the facts that (1) in art, adult standards are not imposed, and (2) it is incumbent upon the teacher to take each pupil "where he is." Since art work is viewed as expression of personality, each person's or group's work is meritorious, even though of low artistic value, and thus the recognition that is received fosters rapport. One has but to observe or experiment with the mediums of art to be convinced that youngsters persevere in those activities in which there is purpose, creativeness, and physical movement. It is extremely challenging to see the absorption with which school children work in both individual and group art projects. Responsibility is stimulated by cooperative group undertakings, by the necessity for caring for tools and materials so that others may find them ready to use, and by the fact that each person can make some contribution to the ongoing activities. When a child fails to recite in a creditable manner or when he makes an outstanding recitation, there is typically little sharing of his feelings by other class members; but when his success or failure conditions that of others, there is a community of feeling. This shared feeling is both a comfort and a challenge and serves as a point of fusion for class morale. Confidence that what is sought can be accomplished is fostered by virtue of the fact that adult standards are not imposed. The feeling that art activities and the study which accompanies them are worth while is buttressed by the fact that learnings are concrete—results can be seen, heard, and felt, as well as discussed verbally.

Art Activities Simplify Motivation. One of the constant problems of the classroom teacher is that of motivation. How can pupils be made to take an interest in geography, spelling, arithmetic, algebra, world his-

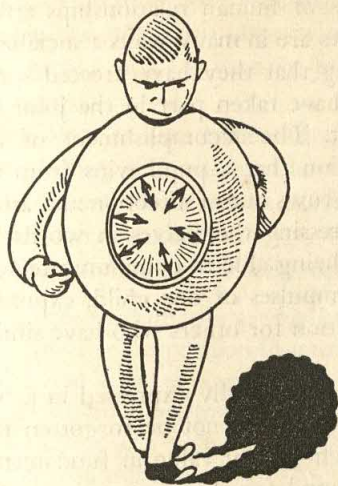
tory? Why does a student with evident ability fail to do anything like the amount and quality of work that can reasonably be expected of him? How can a pupil, handicapped by outside disturbances, be made to forget his troubles long enough to get a strong enough headway so that he will operate under his own power? Art is no panacea for these problems, but it can give assistance.

Interest, enjoyment, success, understanding, and purpose are elements in motivation. Each of these elements is complicated by the existence of individual differences. Art activities, by virtue of the amplitude of alternatives, offer possibilities for meeting these differences. In addition, the opportunity to feel, see, and do adds motivating force. Such motivation can, of course, be secured only if art activities are made part and parcel of the academic learnings. Neither art nor subject matter should be compartmentalized. Rather, one should serve to illustrate, make definite, and amplify the other. If the teacher will but suggest one or two ideas as to how the two can be correlated and then give the students freedom to explore, they will themselves take care of further working out the correlation.

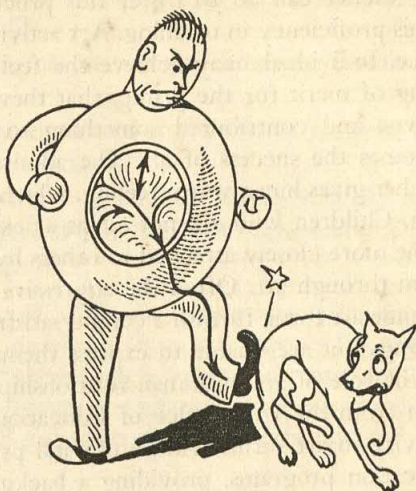
The discerning teacher will secure from art activities the most advantageous dividend in terms of motivation, *i.e.*, an insight into the emotional make-up of the child. His artistic creations will give indications of his fantasies, will help to reveal the problems he feels, will indicate his ambitions, and may help to uncover talents not called into play before. His work will, in short, tend to reveal his private, inner life. The teacher must be careful not to attach too much significance to an isolated art product, but continued study might well reveal persistent trends of personality development.

Art Has Therapeutic Value. It should be remembered that the vast majority of pupils have no pronounced problems of adjustment. Aside from minor disturbances that are quickly settled, most children are successfully meeting the situations of their daily lives in a process of continuous adjustment. Art activities, for these youngsters, merely provide opportunities for varied self-expression. There are, however, those whose adjustment problems are not easily solved. Experimental evidence supports the belief that children wholesomely express their aggressive impulses through art activities—paintings, drawings, modeling, and the like. Adolescents find a way of sublimating their sex impulses in somewhat the same way. Art mediums have been successfully used as a means of releasing emotions and projecting thoughts (see Fig. 6).

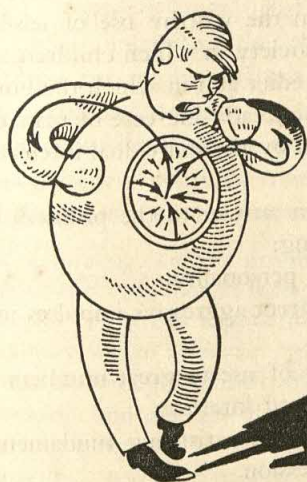
Art Contributes to Facile Human Relationships. Many educators, philosophers, and statesmen have agreed that the foremost problem of the world today is that of human relationships. Certainly, one of the leading objectives of contemporary education is that of socialization. Anything



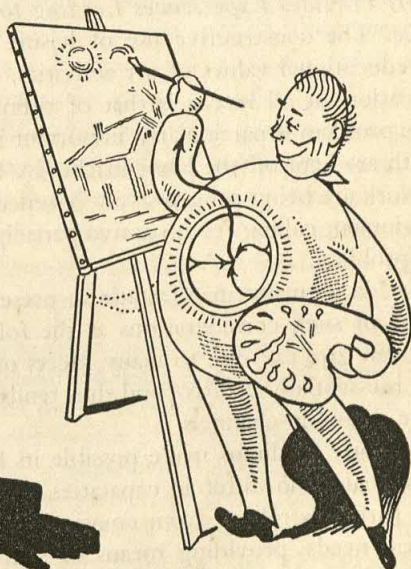
Repression of feelings to produce
shyness, timidity and general
unhappiness



Kicking the dog to release
strong emotion



Fighting, quarreling, pouting
to hide or express feelings



Expressing one's feelings through
socially approved media

Fig. 6. Ways of expressing or dealing with tensions.

the teacher can do to foster this process of human relationships attests to his proficiency in teaching. Art activities are in many ways a socializing force. Individuals may achieve the feeling that they have created something of merit for the group, that they have taken part in the joint endeavor and contributed something to it. The accomplishment of one becomes the success of all. The admiration that a pupil wins from the teacher gives him a warm feeling, which grows out of affection and attention. Children who are not adept at expressing themselves in words become more closely attached to others by being able to communicate with them through art. Often the aggressive impulses of one child, expressed in some art form, furnish a certain satisfaction for others who have similar feelings but are unable to express them.

The role of art in human relationships is pointedly expressed in a bulletin from the U.S. Office of Education. "It must not be forgotten that activity in art forms will be of vital psychological value in fundamental education programs, providing a background for the communication of ideas, developing civic consciousness, responsibility and discipline, and giving an outlet for individual self-expression and a focus for individual and social aspirations."¹⁶

Art Provides Experiences Leading to the Constructive Use of Leisure Time. The constructive use of leisure time must be considered among the educational values of art activities. A recurrently stated objective of education, at all levels, is that of training in the worthy use of leisure. This problem is particularly important in a society in which children and youth are kept off the labor market by legal edict and in which the hours of work are being progressively lessened. The steady increase of mass entertainment calling for no active participation by the individual intensifies the problem.

Art, in its many manifestations, presents an answer to the problem by virtue of such considerations as the following:

It can give exercise to many facets of the personality.

It is essentially creative and thus tends to direct aggressive impulses into more desirable channels.

Its many mediums make possible its being of use to great numbers of individuals who differ in capacities, talents, and interests.

It furnishes release from emotional tensions by satisfying fundamental human needs, providing means of self-expression.

It adds to the beauty and symmetry of everyday life.

It aids in communication and thus makes for easier and happier human relationships.

¹⁶ *Fundamental Education* (as conceived by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), Bulletin 13, 1948, Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, 1948, p. 15.

It can exercise skills that will be of value not only in the esthetic, but also in the utilitarian, aspects of life.

It gives scope for exercise of talents that might otherwise remain undeveloped.

It fosters an awareness and appreciation of the works of masters, thus contributing to well-rounded development.

All these considerations may be summarized by saying that art helps to develop the inner resources that will help children become adults who are independent and possess initiative.

In the field of pure art fundamental education must encourage traditional forms of self-expression in music, dancing, drama, sculpture, or the graphic arts, and as far as possible prevent them from becoming corrupted by commercialization or from dying out through the substitution of mass-produced and extraneous amusements, which cannot replace the satisfaction and creativity afforded by native arts.¹⁷

ART AS A TECHNIQUE OF PERSONALITY ANALYSIS

Limitations of the Technique. As yet, not all the data on art as a means of personality analysis have been gathered. Authorities differ in their interpretation of what certain colors, themes, size, and location mean in terms of revealing personality trends. Interpretation is all the more difficult because it is known that children may draw, construct, and paint as a matter of imitation rather than self-expression. They may be attempting to please the teacher or startle their peers and not just trying to tell of their problems through art forms. Further, an art production may be a spontaneous creation—an interest of the moment—with no significance as to persistent personality traits. Without regarding the child as an artist, we can infer the need for caution from the following quotation:

A picture may contain profound suggestions of sublime tragedy or poignant sentiment, even though the artist himself did not feel them very keenly. . . . A playwright can express in words the emotional attitudes of hatred and jealousy and an actor can portray them without either of them feeling these attitudes strongly himself. Similarly, a painter can represent the facial expressions and gestures that tend to stimulate an emotion in others, without feeling it himself. He can express and represent madness, and yet be quite sane. . . . It is hard to infer from the finished product just what steps were involved in its conception and execution.¹⁸

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁸ Thomas Munro, "Creative Ability in Art, and Its Educational Fostering" in *Art in American Life and Education*, 40th Yearbook of National Society for the Study of Education, Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Ill., 1941, pp. 311-312. By permission of the Society.

Many personality problems do not have their origin in one specific bit of difficulty. Instead, the causes of a problem may be, and most often are, multiple. Hence, the art product that represents only one phase of difficulty does not give an indication of the entire situation. The choice of colors in a crayon drawing or a painting, for instance, will often be a matter of convention or imitation and not an expression of the individual's free choice.

Just as children use similar defense mechanisms—compensation, lying, bullying, shyness, and the like—in response to different situations, so too will they use similar art products in response to varied stimulations. Not every shy child is necessarily an only child who has been overprotected by his parents. Not every bully is one who fails to get his own way in the home. We may be equally sure that one child who draws minute pictures in one corner of the paper does not do it for the same reason that another does. Two children may predominantly use the color black for distinctly different purposes.

Considerations such as these lead to the conclusion that analysis through art must be approached with a good deal of caution. The technique can be used by the classroom teacher as a supplementary source of data; but for the present, detailed analysis through art should be left in the hands of the expert.

The Classroom Teacher as Analyst. Even though there be limitations to the technique of personality analysis through art mediums, the classroom teacher need not reject the method or avoid using it. Certainly, there is no reason why he cannot experiment freely with the methods, provided he keeps in mind that the results are questionable. It is interesting and always informative (even though results are negative) to try a new technique. Experimentation in analysis through art can serve to add color and variety to a job that at times becomes discouraging.

The art productions of a child can be understood better and the child can be better understood through them when the teacher has other information about him—his past school record, his test data, case studies, information about his home and family, reports from other teachers. The very least contribution that art can make is that it will raise some questions: Is this child inhibited? Could this represent some sex conflict? Is this youngster hiding some strongly aggressive or destructive desire?

Art mediums will be helpful if the precaution is heeded that single productions are less valuable in analysis than are several by the same child. When several are studied, trends can be noted (dominant themes, favorite colors, persistent kinds of action) and changes will begin to take on significance.

Personality analysis through art will be on safe ground if the conclusions drawn are tentative only, waiting for the support of corroborative evi-

dence from other sources. Tentative conclusions can lead to remedial hypotheses. As the hypothesis, put into action, indicates success or failure, it will be changed and the tentative conclusions will be revised.

Even when we conclude that art in the hands of the classroom teacher is not a highly accurate analytic technique—to say nothing of the therapeutic value of freedom in art activities—there still remains the best reason for the teacher's use of the technique. This is that the art productions of a child may assist him in a verbal expression of his problem that the teacher can understand. Children often have greater ease in describing the meaning of their art work than in answering direct questions about their difficulties. Children who resist any direct show of sympathy are likely to find it easier to respond to interest taken in their work and can be led on to a confidential relationship which will help the teacher in analyzing their behavior. Art can help in getting at a child's story.

SUMMARY

Art activities deserve serious consideration in the mental hygiene program of the school and in the total educational program, because of the many human needs they can efficiently serve. Forward-looking teachers are emphasizing such constructive services of art activities by using them as avenues for freedom of self-expression and as a factor in forwarding the process of socialization. Art, in order to serve such functions, must be regarded as a supplementary and correlative area of activity and not be set apart as a distinct subject in the curriculum. Thus, art can be used (1) as a means of enriching the core curriculum, but also (2) as a means of esthetic pleasure and for expressing the personality.

Art productions and activity can serve as a projective technique for both analysis and therapy. Fortunately, the teacher can use the therapeutic aspects of art without placing too great emphasis upon art as a technique for analysis. The therapeutic values can be realized because of the many mediums available, making it possible to recognize functionally individual differences among students.

Art adds strength to the total educational program by aiding in the development of teacher-pupil rapport, by strengthening motivation, and by providing emotional release to some who need and can use it. Better human relationships are fostered through art activities, both because they offer a means of communication and because they are particularly well suited to cooperative undertakings. But the educational results are not only social. Many of the values are personal, because art can lead to the establishment of constructive habits in the use of leisure time.

Although the use of art as a highly analytical instrument may well be left to the expert, many others of its mental hygiene values can be taken advantage of. Not the least of these values is that art can be an effective

means for finding out the child's own story. Art activities are the natural expressions of childhood. Let's study them.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Cite any evidences with which you are acquainted of a changed role for art in the schools.
2. Get hold of some children's creative art work and attempt to interpret the product in terms of their personality characteristics. If possible, verify your views from more objective data.
3. Get your classmates to draw a picture of some abstract feeling, such as happiness, sadness, success, failure, hope, or frustration. See if there are any similarities in what is depicted.
4. How might art be used to supplement the teaching of arithmetic in the sixth grade? Could art be used in a chemistry class?
5. What could you personally do in the field of art to enhance your use of it with your pupils?
6. Why do you think clay might be an advantageous medium to place in the hands of an overactive child?
7. Observe some grade for a few hours and see what use is made of art activities. Is it a routinized use or is there opportunity for creativity?
8. Can you recall any instances in which art was serviceable as a means of motivation for academic work?
9. Do you know of anyone who has used some art activity as a means of therapy? Describe the difficulty and the technique used to ameliorate it.
10. Outline a plan for using art as a means of personality analysis. Present your plan to class members for evaluation and suggestions.
11. Distinguish between art activities used for analysis and those used for therapy.

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

FAULKNER, RAY N., and HELEN E. DAVIS, *Teachers Enjoy the Arts*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1943. 57 pp.

This booklet presents the role art plays in the work of the average teacher. The enthusiastic response of teachers who participated in various art workshops is described. How art can affect the personal life of the teacher and how it can aid in his work is a major emphasis.

LOWENFELD, VIKTOR, *Creative and Mental Growth*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. 304 pp.

This is a text for elementary and secondary teachers describing the use of art at all levels for growth in creative expression. There is a strong emphasis on art as a means of personality integration. It is well illustrated for the purpose of showing how the various art mediums can be used in effective education.

READ, HERBERT, *Education through Art*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1949. 320 pp.

This book provides material for a serious study of the relationship of art and personality. Such chapters as "The Art of Children" and "Temperament and

Expression" throw additional light on some of the problems of classroom teachers. Pictures are used abundantly to illustrate personality trends.

SCHAEFER-SIMMERN, HENRY, *The Unfolding of Artistic Activity*, Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1948. 201 pp.

Practical and tested recommendations for using art in fostering creativity and in understanding people are given by the author. The book is abundantly illustrated to clarify and exemplify the viewpoints presented.

WINSLOW, LEON, *The Integrated School Art Program*, 2d ed., New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949. 422 pp.

The author presents a balanced program for art activities related to life experiences. Emphasis is on both the esthetic values of art and its use in enriching the study of the core curriculum. Illustrations serve to show how art can be effectively used in modern educational programs.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Brush in Action, International Film Bureau, Suite 1500, 6 North Michigan Ave., Chicago 2. (10 min, BW, sd.)

Designed to teach how to use water color brushes and to stimulate the desire to do so. The *Film World* says, "Particularly recommended for beginners."

Finger Painting, New York University Film Library, 26 Washington Square, New York 20. (20 min, BW, si.)

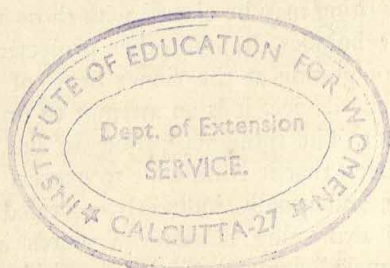
An introduction to the use of finger painting by children by means of which personality patterns are recognized.

Puppetry, Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., 342 Madison Ave., New York. (10 min, BW, sd.)

Shows intermediate and junior- and senior-high-school pupils how to make puppets and use them for entertainment and education. A descriptive manuscript is available.

Why Young America Paints, Association Films, 35 West 45th St., New York 19. (10 min, C, sd.)

Many mediums of painting are shown—brush, finger, dry color, wax crayons. Sufficient detail and explanations are given to allow the newcomer to try his own hand at it. Work done by junior- and senior-high-school students is shown.



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WRITING FOR UNDERSTANDING AND RELEASE

IT HAS been emphasized repeatedly that mental hygiene has many aspects and approaches. Fundamentally, any successful approach must, in some way, contribute to the satisfaction of some basic human need or needs. Previous chapters have dealt with such matters as the predominant needs and their satisfaction at various phases of development. Mention has been made of constructive classroom methods which tend to meet these needs. The necessity of being understood is a predominant problem in the development of pupil personality, in effective teaching, and in wholesome discipline. Art has been used to illustrate avenues for improved understanding and the release of tensions. Earlier chapters have been concerned with the matter of personality growth through socially approved mediums of release—academic accomplishment, peer relationships, wholesome contacts with adults; and Chapter 15 will consider release and understanding through participation in play. Attention has been given primarily to the matter of diagnosis (or understanding) so that appropriate attention can be given to individual differences.

This chapter deals with the release of tensions and the satisfaction of basic needs through the use of creative writing. Because of its utter simplicity, creative writing is rapidly gaining in popularity as a technique for classroom diagnosis. The conviction that it is a powerful preventive of difficulty is widespread.

Creative writing may be classed with those approaches which are called projective techniques. It, like other projective techniques, can be used as a means of getting at the "inner man" of the total personality. As a mental hygiene device, it is an attempt to understand the private world of the subject. The thoughts, problems, and conflicts of the individual that are so deep that it is difficult to express them specifically in words are partially, and usually indirectly, revealed by what one writes. The difficulty of expressing tensions in words is a common symptom of personality maladjustment. Creative writing tends to circumvent this difficulty.

The student writer, released and free, will tend to employ his writing to fulfill his own needs. If he is starved for beauty, he will seek to create it. If he is struggling with some force he regards as evil, he will seek to dramatize such a struggle. If he is hungry for companionship, he will undertake to picture and to celebrate such friendship as he might wish to have. If he is insecure, he will imagine states of security and develop them with some passion. If he chafes under childish restraints, he will be preoccupied with themes that suggest wide, sweeping adult freedom.¹

Creative writing is not a panacea for inarticulateness. It is, however, an approach. It supplies clues to that "inner man" which is too secret to be readily confided to others. This chapter deals with some of the advantages and limitations of creative writing as a means of expression that can serve preventive, diagnostic, and therapeutic functions.

FUNDAMENTAL NEEDS AND CREATIVE WRITING

Contemporary Life and Creativity. The author objects to the plethora of statements which unfavorably compare the present with the beautiful and romantic past. He certainly has no wish to see a return to the "good old days." Nevertheless, it can be said with some truth that opportunities for creativity seem to be fewer today than in previous generations. The active satisfaction of making an outfit of clothes, a quilt, a rug, a chair, or a chest of drawers has been replaced by the relatively passive process of placing one's money on the counter and receiving a ready-made, stereotyped article. Even the earning of the money may have involved a routine, monotonous activity. Along with the advantage of time saving through the purchase of ready-made products must go the disadvantage of giving up opportunities for self-expression and creativity. Even the time saved is likely to be used in passively watching mass entertainment and crowd spectacles. The high development of art on the stage or the screen indirectly robs the observer of chances for participating in an amateur production. Professionalism in sports has tended to reduce the number of town teams in football and baseball. Thus, the opportunity for offsetting the drabness of mass production through creative avocations and recreations has been ignored and still more of the mass type of activity has been imposed. Certainly, it is the consensus of mental hygienists that one of the hazards of present-day mental health is the decline in the number of avenues for personal creativity.

Children, too, suffer from the lack of creative opportunity. They are characteristically provided with ready-made toys, though they often cast

¹ Lawrence A. Conrad, of the Creative Writing Committee of the Progressive Education Association, *Teaching Creative Writing*, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1937, p. 7. By permission of the publisher, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.

these aside to invent their own games with cans, sticks, and mud. Elaborate formal programs, devised with the best of adult intentions, push them into preconceived patterns of behavior, leaving them with little opportunity for creative independence. Early in the school years, radio occupies an abnormally large portion of their free hours, and passivity, rather than creativity, is characteristic of their use of time. Television, even more attractive to children than is radio, offers no more stimulation to the creative impulse.

A fundamental need, today as well as yesterday, is the need to be creative. The wording may differ from writer to writer, but numbers of psychologists list the desire to create among basic needs. One may call it a desire to be a cause; another may list it as effective effort; a third designates it as the desire for achievement or mastery; and still another may label it simply as the need for creative expression. Regardless of the terminology used, there is both scientific and empirical evidence that creative activity does much to round out and enrich the life of humans.

There are several reasons why the subject of creative activity is significant to the person interested in promoting good mental health. The first is, of course, that creativity gives one an opportunity to exercise and develop his capacities. Just as a child wishes to play right now with the new toy he has received, and the adult cannot wait to drive his new car, so people in general are eager to exercise the capacities they have. This generalization refers not only to the skills one has already developed and the capacities of which he is aware, but also to aptitudes which at the moment are unrecognized. It is thought, for instance, that some misbehavior in school can be justifiably attributed to the fact that the traditional school curriculum does not present a wide enough variety of activities for fulfilling the needs of the many children who are forced to go to school. Bright children, though not characteristically troublemakers, sometimes seem to get into mischief in order to satisfy an urge for activity in some other pursuit than class routines. Then, too, there are tensions one may have developed, not through absence of opportunity for creativity but because of parental incompatibility or lack of economic means. These tensions may be indirectly released through participation in various creative enterprises. Another reason for the significance of creative activity, not unrelated to those mentioned above, is that it provides a means of therapy for those who are already mentally ill. It is a technique widely used in institutions for mentally, emotionally, and socially maladjusted persons.

Creative Writing and Mental Health. The statements made about creativity in general hold for creative writing as well. It can be an avenue for accomplishment, a means for satisfying the need to create. It affords an opportunity for self-expression and personal growth. There can be

no doubt that, given an appropriate setting, writing can provide for the relief of tensions and thus serve as a means of therapy. If too many rules are not imposed, it opens an opportunity for recognizing and dealing with individual differences. In addition, creative writing may serve to give the discerning teacher an insight into the motivations of individual students and thus can become a means of diagnosis or, at least, of additional understanding. This understanding may well lead to the suggestion of some means of therapy which will go beyond the writing itself.

Teachers who give their pupils an opportunity to derive the values from creative writing mentioned above are making another contribution to mental health, *i.e.*, practice in objectifying the tensions which they may feel, and making them definite. This advantage will be seen somewhat more clearly in the analysis of pupils' writings later in the chapter; but the point is emphasized in the following words:

What Dr. Campbell [a practicing psychiatrist] said, in effect, was that the patients who were brought to him because they had been judged to be seriously maladjusted or even "insane," showed one chief symptom: *They were unable to tell him clearly what was the matter.* They simply could not put into words the difficulties with which they were beset. Surely no one who has made it his business to help people in trouble has failed to observe their relative inarticulateness.²

It is entirely possible that, if more opportunity could be provided for free, creative writing while children are young, there might be considerably less difficulty that involves inability to express oneself and to get rid of frustrating tensions.

Educators have in a few instances seen the possibilities of improving personality adjustment through writing. Lou LaBrant states that "Creative writing provides a means by which the individual's own problems may become impersonal and be open to solution."³ A committee of the Progressive Education Association believes, "Creative work in art and writing, for example, are rich in possibilities for objectifying emotional conflicts."⁴

But perhaps the greatest advantage of being free to write and being encouraged to do so is that of letting off steam. All the books and articles on the subject mention this advantage. Teachers who have supplied the samples of writing shown later in this chapter have all mentioned this

² Wendell Johnson, *People in Quandaries*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946, p. 15. By permission of the publisher.

³ P. A. Witty and C. E. Skinner (eds.), *Mental Hygiene in Modern Education*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1939, p. 345. By permission of the publisher.

⁴ V. T. Thayer, Caroline B. Zachry, and Ruth Kotinsky, *Reorganizing Secondary Education*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1939, p. 184. By permission of the publisher.

factor. Though they are not just sure how it works, they report that their pupils have seemed to feel better after writing about something that surprised or bothered them. Although he was dealing with talking rather than writing, Joshua Liebman expressed the importance of release as follows:

As one grateful and very intelligent corporal remarked: "Expressing my fears—putting them into words—made them evaporate harmlessly like steam escaping from a kettle."

Seal up even a small teakettle, place it over a flame, and it will wreck a house. But let the powerful vapors escape, and the kettle *sings*.⁵

EXAMPLES OF RELEASE THROUGH CREATIVE COMPOSITION

Preschool Children Express Themselves. The idea of using creative effort in the form of children's compositions for understanding pupils is quite novel. Relatively few teachers have experimented with it. This is not necessarily a handicap, because as soon as the approach is stereotyped some of its values will be lost. If the teacher starts with some general ideas as to the utility of creative writing, he can develop the technique in accordance with his own needs and situation. For example, much of the material in the subsection dealing with creative writing by secondary-school pupils was derived from the experiences of a teacher who, having read a few accounts of the possibilities, decided to experiment on her own. She reported with surprise and gratification how much she learned about her pupils during her very first efforts. The major element is to give pupils a clear understanding that they are free to express themselves as they wish.

A question that arises early is "When can such an approach be instituted?" A partial answer to this question is given by Dorothy Walter Baruch, consulting psychologist, who has advised creative expression for preschool youngsters.⁶ Mothers were encouraged to write down the mutterings of their disgruntled children. Instead of requiring children to obey, to conform, the mothers were asked to permit release of "bad" thoughts, to accept the children, and to let them know that their feelings were understood. A four-and-a-half-year-old girl chanted the following and her mother wrote it down:

I don't like skin on milk,
Or skin on custard pudding.
I don't like skin on cocoa.

⁵ Joshua Loth Liebman, *Peace of Mind*, New York, Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1946, pp. 36-37. By permission of the publisher.

⁶ Dorothy Walter Baruch, *New Ways in Discipline*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949, Chap. 11, "Story Books of Their Own," pp. 176-188.

I don't like skin.
Except just skin on me
Where skin ought to be.

Rapport was established when the mother said, "You don't like lots of things!" "No, I don't!" the girl replied.⁷ A four-year-old boy felt better after his mother had read to him, fifteen times, what he had said and she had written:

You make me do things
I don't want to do.
I hate to do things.
I hate you.

"Then after a great hug, he jumped down and ran off, chanting, 'You make me do things, etc.'"⁸

Here is an indication that free "literary" expression, if we may be permitted a free interpretation of the term, can be utilized from the very beginning of school experience. If the teacher can get rid of false notions of propriety, he can encourage pupils at any age to drain off some of the venom of their feelings through having their thoughts written down. Further therapy is accomplished by having what they have composed read back to them.

Elementary Pupils Express Themselves. When youngsters have acquired the skill of writing, an atmosphere of freedom will encourage them to sublimate their feelings in creative expression. Baruch reports the case of a group of fourth-graders who sat enthralled as they listened to their teacher read aloud the things they had written.

THE WICKED MAN

Do you know who the wicked man is? I know but I won't tell. He looks like a guy named Bill. He's very wicked. He doesn't like anybody. And he can do what he wants to them because he's very big. He's a giant. He says to his father and mother, "Lie down," and they have to because he's so big, and they're scared of him. "Yes, Bill," they say. "Yes, Bill. All right, Bill. Yes, Bill. Yes."

So they lie down and he steps all over them with his big feet. He kicks them and steps on them and they cry and cry and beg for mercy. So he finely gives in in case they'll promise always to be good.⁹

Mrs. Natalie Robinson Cole, a teacher of fourth- and fifth-graders in the California Street School, Los Angeles, reports, "I found myself learning more about these children and their lives than I could hope to learn

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 176. By permission of the author and the publisher.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 178. By permission of the author and the publisher.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 185. By permission of the author and publisher.

in years in any other way.”¹⁰ Her first step was to give up thoughts of academic approach and artistic criteria of what it means to be creative. She was simply concerned with freeing her pupils to express themselves and believed that they could lead the way. She felt that their first writing was rather poor and lifeless, but then she conceived the idea of a wall newspaper. Youngsters whose work was judged to be deemed meritorious had their work put on the paper. Gradually, materials were composed that seemed truly creative, even though none of them seemed very remarkable.

But the teacher is getting the child to express himself from his own background of experience and is developing his respect for himself as a personality of interest. Also she is gaining a little significant information that will aid her in understanding this child in particular, and all children in general. If the teacher is interested in what John said or did when he was a baby, she is helping to establish a friendly feeling, a rapport between them that will make her every word count. Don't we ourselves like people who are interested in us as human beings rather than what we know of Holland, airplanes, or anything else?¹¹

It was not until the end of the third term that Mrs. Cole felt she could encourage pupils to reveal their innermost feelings. She talked with them regarding the funny ideas that adults have, about some of the difficulties she had experienced in her childhood, and the pupils wrote. Some of them thought it would be all right to have their pieces read to the class but others wrote secrets, just for their teacher. “. . . I don't like people who is teasing me, and lot of other thing, and I don't like the bedbug and don't like to stay home and I don't like people who call me skinnybone and Uncle Sam and dirty pig and a rat, and the worst they call me is a Jap.”¹² It is evident that adults are not the only ones who can profit from catharsis. Children, too, need to get things off their chests—to take down their hair. They can obviously be made to feel better for having written down what is on their minds. Free writing has a double-barreled impact for the child. First, it helps him to get rid of the festering tensions that might otherwise break out in trouble. Second, “They [creative activities] permit the child to explore with impunity his confused and often resentful feelings about life experiences which he does not yet understand.”¹³ Too often the need for a child to satisfy his curiosity is thwarted by adult conceptions of propriety.

¹⁰ Natalie Robinson Cole, *The Arts in the Classroom*, New York: The John Day Company, 1940, p. 105. By permission of the publisher.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 110–111. By permission of the publisher.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 130. By permission of the publisher.

¹³ William E. Henry in *Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*, 1950 Yearbook of National Education Association, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C., 1950, p. 258. By permission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

There is still a third concomitant of creative writing that is indirect, but no less valuable to the child. It helps adults to understand him better. It gives them clues to the child's private world, which is such a powerful, though unseen, factor in motivation. Mary Padavon, visiting teacher in the Portland (Oregon) public schools, said this:

Some of the children who are referred to us find it difficult in their first interviews to express their feelings and to discuss their problems. They are helped to do this by the visiting teacher in various ways. One of them is writing. They often can write what they feel either in story form, in poetry, or in connection with pictures which they draw. I have one girl who writes poetry when she feels sad. She doesn't understand why she has written it, but her poems are a clue to us.

A remedial reading teacher, also of the Portland schools, asserts, "We as remedial teachers, working with children having emotional-social blockings, feel that the creative expression of writing, drawing, painting, and the like offers clues for us in better understanding our children."

However much this improved understanding may help the child, there is enrichment for the teacher, quite apart from increased professional competency. Says Mrs. Cole, "Through giving children confidence, the teacher will gain confidence, through sharing their troubles her own heart will become lighter, through enriching their experience, she also will be enriched."¹⁴

A Third-grade Teacher's Experience with Writing. Mrs. Hazel Van Cleve, a third-grade teacher, took her pupils to the Union Pacific shops to gather common experiences for doing classwork. Her report of the reactions of one boy illustrates the value of emphasizing creative writing.

My third-grade "roundhouse" takes all engines, in any condition in which they arrive, and attempts to recondition them for roadability. It is with this "Roundhouse" and with these seven- to nine-year-old engines that the experiments and experiences are taking place for this study.

Johnny Engine was towed in with a pressure-damaged boiler, no headlight, and a lost toot. His father gave up golf—with cups and trophies attached—to help live his life. His mother lives for her family but said, when she brought him to school in his sixth year, that she could do nothing with him. He and his high-school sister live on a semi-bickering basis at all times. An older boy, several doors down his street, physically derailed all small engines. Johnny saved his steam and made life miserable for his sister. He has a furnished basement room for his hermit play existence where he dwells with bugs, snakes, and what have you. He could imitate a cricket and one bird but stood, with longing eyes, on the sideline of all games and activities and would not sing a note.

Water pours less frequently from his boiler these days, the pressure of his

¹⁴ Cole, *op. cit.*, p. 137. By permission of the publisher.

engine is rising, his whistle can toot four bird calls and innumerable songs, and his headlight was beaming when he handed me this.

The Humming Bird

One sunny day in April
I saw a humming bird.
At first I saw his color
And then his hum I heard.
Of moss and twigs he built his nest.
He likes it the very best.

Johnny has other emotions to express:

"Once upon a time there was a train. His name was Chug Chug. He was a smart train. He lived in the Union Pacific Station and was one of the best trains. But one day something bad happened. He was coming to a cross track. He turned to the left and there coming toward him was a streamliner. He thought to himself, 'I wish that I had turned to the right, then this would not have happened.' The two trains met with a big loud thundering crash. Chug Chug was repaired in a month and a half and from that day on he thought."

One may not look into his mind to see the dreams he dreams but creative writing is like a mirror, it reflects the dreams he dreams. Time, kindness, and understanding will open the book of his life, page by page, so that one may read what is written therein that one may help erase ugly marks of experience and straighten pages wrinkled by unthinking hands.¹⁵

Secondary-school Pupils Express Themselves. Teachers who have tried the technique of free writing report that for some pupils it is easier to describe specific difficulties in written form than it is to talk about them. This is because the individual writes in privacy and hence does not feel any pressure from the physical presence of another person. When a person is not directly trying to explain or rationalize his troubles, the creative writing makes it possible to release pressures which are too personal to be expressed pointedly. For example, a fourteen-year-old boy who was known to be having difficulty in his home situation was asked by his teacher to write about "An Ideal Parent." Her hope was that he would write, not about his difficulties, but about a desired solution. The boy wrote as follows:

The ideal parent should be understanding of boys and girls and should try to help them in a way in which not to offend or hurt their feelings. The parent should be able to play with the child and make him feel as though he is safe in bringing up any questions which he feels he should know. He

¹⁵ Mrs. Hazel Van Cleve, *Creative Writing as an Emotional Outlet for Children*, unpublished master's degree study, Portland, Ore.: Oregon State System of Higher Education, 1951, pp. 5-6, 35-36.

should take his child to a baseball game sometimes and basketball, also to ice hockey sometimes too. The parent should take the boy on camping trips and let him go camping alone with his friends.

L. lived with his mother, his father having left them when L. was very small. His mother worked to support herself and the boy and, although she took definite interest in his work and activities, apparently was often too tired to give the attention L. desired. The teacher felt that he relieved his frustrations by showing an ideal state of family existence, that his dissatisfaction was mollified by his having shown the sort of family life he would like to have. It is entirely possible that L. would have felt disloyal if he had directly criticized his mother and would have continued to be restive if he had contained his feelings completely; but in his writing he could "beat around the bush" by referring to "boys and girls" and "the child."

Another example of the release through free writing of tensions generated by a family situation is afforded by J., a girl in her senior year. This girl had often spoken to the teacher about her parents and both her older and younger sisters. There was no observable tension between J. and her older sister; but she showed in her writing that she felt that her superiority in years should give her some decided prerogatives over her younger sister. It became obvious in her writing that at least some degree of tension was aroused by a violation of what she regarded as her rights.

An ideal younger sister should realize she is younger and doesn't deserve the same privileges her older sister has, such as staying out late. The ideal sister should realize that the older sister deserves more privileges and should wait her turn. The average sister doesn't however. She demands the same privileges her older sister has, which, if she gets them, aren't good for her because she grows up too fast. Sometimes this can work the other way and keep the older sister from receiving privileges due her because of the younger sister.

No doubt J. felt better for having got something "off her chest" or for having "taken down her hair." But another facet of free writing is suggested by the above. Might not J.'s observation about an older sister suggest that J. has been receiving the very privileges which she would like to deny her younger sister? The attempt to get an answer to this question will lead the teacher to a better understanding of J. Moreover, a discussion of the possible interpretations of what was written will help J. to achieve a better understanding of herself.

The teacher of another girl who had hostile feelings toward her younger sisters reports that K. was entirely justified in writing as she did about the sister, who was very well known to the teacher.

An ideal sister would do her own washing and ironing and would not leave it for someone else to do. She would let you study in peace, not blast the radio or play the piano. She would not spend all morning in the bathroom so you could have a chance. She would be cheerful about doing things with the family even if she preferred to do something else, and she would not get angry when told that she couldn't go out on a certain night. She would not complain about not having enough clothes when she saw some other member of the family buying something she wanted. She would not pout.

K.'s mother is a widow and K. feels that she has a definite responsibility for helping affairs along. The teacher reported that she believed K.'s writing proved to be a real catharsis for the tension generated by her conflicting feelings—loyalty and responsibility for the family, as opposed to resentment against her spoiled and sulky sister.¹⁶

The three foregoing illustrations dealing with family situations might better be called "free" writing than "creative" writing. The writing of C. illustrates an aspect of writing involving fantasy and might more properly be called "creative." C. is a senior of high intelligence and extreme shyness. She was so timid that she did not volunteer to talk in class and, when called on, spoke in a whisper even though she had the correct answer and an abundance of information to impart. Her friends reported that she had no dates. She was so quiet that it was doubtful whether boys noticed her. She was not particularly attractive physically, but she had a charming manner which, unfortunately, was hidden from those who did not take time to get acquainted with her.

The following was written by C. at the time the teacher was encouraging free writing. It shows that she feels what is so obvious to others.

Just a few minutes ago, Jane found herself in third period class. Someone hurriedly asked her for some paper, and then he almost instantly returned it. Well, why doesn't he make up his mind? she thought, with an annoyed expression on her face.

A hoarse whisper broke the silence between the teacher's questions. "Read it," said the squeaky voice.

Then she saw a scrawl on the other side which was almost impossible to read because the ink had faded near the end, but two words couldn't have been clearer: "dance—Saturday?" The senior with the blond crew cut grinned bashfully across the aisle.

"Me?" she asked unbelievably.

"Who else?" was the reply.

¹⁶ Janice Schukart, *Achieving a Better Understanding of Adolescent Problems through Creative Writing*, unpublished master's thesis, Portland, Ore.: Reed College, 1950, p. 40.

She automatically nodded in the affirmative, turned her head, gulped loudly, and tried to look studious. The period finally came to an end. The blond shuffled along beside her giving a few vague details and then vanished. Her eyes followed the retreating figure.

C., without doubt, received a certain vicarious satisfaction from her fantasy; but she also received a more direct and constructive satisfaction. The teacher, without being alarmed about the degree of fantasy revealed in the writing, knew that it might easily be carried too far. She determined to look more closely into the situation to find why the girl was so shy that she resorted to a make-believe boy friend. It is evident that rapport with the teacher was already high or C. could not have written as freely as she did. A private conversation with the girl revealed that she felt inferior because of an older brother who had distinguished himself in academic activities. Although her brother was only two years older, he was in his junior year at Stanford and had made a brilliant record in an engineering course. C.'s parents had never criticized her for lack of diligence or scholarship, but in the presence of friends and relatives it was always her brother who was the focal point of conversations about the family. She had acquired the feeling that she would never be able to equal her brother's record. The teacher was able to show C. that her contributions in class were valuable, that she was at the head of her class in examinations, and that she possessed a naturally warm social personality that could easily make her popular. The teacher made free use of praise in an attempt to compensate for the feelings of inferiority revealed by the girl's actions, further indicated in her writing, and objectified in their conversations. Before the end of the year, C. had become more active in class activities and was seen more frequently in groups of pupils, in which boys were occasionally included.

Certainly creative writing and perhaps fantasy are evident in the writing of a fourteen-year-old junior-high-school lad who has felt the pain of social discrimination. One cannot read his poem (possibly copied or memorized) without being convinced that P. was both "objectifying" his feelings and shrugging off the hurt at the same time.

Pretty Anna May Malone
Had a heart as hard as stone;
Every year since she was eight
She has been my best playmate.

I half loved that Irish kid
'Till she said just what she did,
Said for me her love was through
'Cause she'd heard I'm half a Jew.

She doesn't need to feel high-toned
 Cause her dad kissed the blarney stone.
 I don't think I know it all
 Cause my dad had a wailing wall.

Time will show you Anna May
 The big mistake you made today.
 It's the truth I'm half a Jew
 But that's the half that cared for you.

It is easy to conjecture that this might be a better world, one in which there were markedly fewer petty interpersonal actions and remarks, if more adults of today had been led by understanding teachers to express their feelings in writing, as P. did.

Even if it were denied that writing such as the foregoing samples does much, or even anything, to release tensions, it can hardly be questioned that the writings give an opportunity for rounding out one's personality through self-expression. In the following sample no tensions are apparent. Nevertheless, the teacher is rendering the pupil a mental health service by stimulating her to express her joy of living. The poem is a source of satisfaction to both teacher and pupil.

We praise Thee, dear Lord, for the things of earth,
 For each dainty flower,
 For all of nature's beauties.
 We praise Thee, O Lord, for things above the earth,
 For the love of our Father,
 For the beauty of the skies,
 For all the things we may touch,
 For the beauty of things we may see.
 For all that surrounds us,
 Dear Lord, we thank Thee.
 For Thy bounteous goodness,
 Thy radiant love, Thy sweet forgiveness,
 Dear Lord, we thank Thee.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING CREATIVE WRITING

It seems somewhat paradoxical to make suggestions for directing creative writing, because freedom is a basic aspect of the technique. The success attained by any one teacher in the use of the technique will depend more upon the adaptation of the procedures than upon his ability to follow directions. If this precaution is kept in mind, some helpful suggestions, derived from the experiences of teachers, can safely be made.

Keep Criticism at a Minimum. The author has no desire to belittle the functions of punctuation, phrasing, spelling, and language usage; but it does seem that sometimes preoccupation with these matters obscures the

more important matter of expressing an idea (even if it be crudely done at first). Perhaps the communication of ideas would be simplified if first place were given to the idea instead of to punctuation and spelling. All too frequently, experience in punctuation is confined to exercises in a workbook or to placing the marks correctly in a sentence which the teacher has placed on the blackboard. These exercises have their importance, but not to the extent of excluding something to communicate. Just as a father can break down his young son's interest in a game of catch by constantly pointing out errors and remarking that the lad is throwing like a girl, so the teacher can weaken a pupil's interest in expression by constantly criticizing form and usage. A frequently recurring warning found in educational psychology books is to keep criticism at a minimum. Teachers might well take a hint from the technique of some athletic coaches, who first let their tyros swim or play basketball or tennis and then, *only after a beginning has been made*, start to call attention to a detail or two at a time, taking care not to spoil the fun by overcoaching. It is not expected that grade- and high-school students will equal the form and precision of a famous novelist or poet. It is worth while to consider that the grammatical details can become aids to the clear expression of ideas—ideas that have been nourished, encouraged, and cultivated through an understanding attitude on the part of the teacher. This does not imply that form and correct usage will take care of themselves. Practice, by itself, does not make perfect; practice merely consolidates the form that has been acquired. Direction is needed; but, especially in the initial stages of learning, criticism should be kept at a minimum.

Rapport Is Necessary for Free Expression. It has previously been said that rapport between the teacher and his pupils is a basic element in effective teaching. Rapport is especially necessary if students are to write something which will be a revelation of their inner selves. They must feel that the teacher will be sympathetic to their feelings, that he will be tolerant of their shortcomings. Two factors are outstanding in the development of such rapport. (1) The teacher must take time to learn about and understand individual students. He can do this through studying the records that are available, talking with other teachers about individuals, and particularly by talking with (and this involves listening) the students as individuals. (2) He must know enough in general about the age group with which he is dealing to be able to recognize the sincerity of their feelings and responses.

It would not do for a teacher to make an assignment from which he wished to get understandings about the pupils on his first day with a new class. Asking them to describe their pet peeves will not be a successful project until the pupils have gained, through contact, some confidence

in their new teachers. Even after a period of acquaintance, it is unlikely that materials which possess diagnostic values will be obtained from pupils on the first or the second attempt. This is true, not only because the teacher is relatively strange, but also because the students have probably not had sufficient experience in considering their feelings objectively.

Maintain Balance between Nondirection and Prescription. When making an assignment which will involve free writing, it is necessary to give directions without being so explicit as to inhibit free expression. Thus, students would not be *told* to release their feelings in their writings or to purge their resentments by vehement expressions. In fact, it is well to keep from them the impression that an analysis of their motivations is being sought through their writing. Aside from telling the students to be frank in the expression of their feelings and ideas, it will be enough to suggest some topics from which they may make a selection, or ask them to choose a topic of their own if they are not satisfied with the suggestions. Topics which teachers have used with success include the following:

My Ideal Boy (Girl) Friend
A Good Teacher
A School I Should Like to Attend
My Biggest Wish
What Makes a Good Sister (Brother)
Things That Irritate Me
My Pet Peeve
How to Have Fun
What Religion Does for Me

Other topics that fit the time, tenor of the class, and age level of the students will readily occur to the teacher.

Use Free Writing to Supplement Other Sources of Information. It must be emphasized that free writing is here suggested as a (one) source of information—an additional source. The writing of an individual can be used as a *partial* explanation of the symptoms of behavior which are seen in class and on the playground and of the behaviors that are sometimes recorded in case histories and anecdotal records. Whether knowledge about the child precedes understanding his compositions, stories, and poems or whether information gleaned from the writing precedes an understanding of the individual is a debatable point. All that a pupil writes, from primary grades through high school, can be examined, to see whether these expressions suggest areas which deserve further investigation—through questioning, through home visitation, through consultation with other teachers, or through examination of records. These sources and the writing of the student are supplementary to each other. Insight into

the behavior of a pupil can be gained from his writing, and his writing becomes more comprehensible when supplemented with knowledge about his home conditions, school progress, persisting sources of frustration, social adjustment, and physical handicaps or illness. It is not enough to know that K. (pp. 329-330) resents the behavior of her sister, it is also vital to know that she has some justification for her feeling.

The author is convinced that free writing is most valuable when it serves as the starting point for a personal interview. If rapport is high, the teacher can get the pupil to express himself still more freely in an interview. Emphasis should rest upon further expression from the pupil, and care must be exercised that the interview does not become an occasion for offering an overwhelming amount of tutorial advice. Rather, the teacher should be intent on asking questions which will lead to an extended unfolding of the thoughts the pupil may have. As he talks beyond the point of his writing, he will often come to a better understanding of his own problems. If this precaution is observed, the writing serves, in effect, as a starting point for additional release.

The Writing Should Be Observed for What It Is. Free writing is a subjective report and should be regarded as such. The purpose is to find out how the student feels, not necessarily what the facts of the situation are. However, it should be particularly stressed that to know how the individual reacts is important. Without this information, the picture of the total situation is incomplete. If anyone *feels* handicapped, if he *feels* that he is being discriminated against, if he *feels* that he suffers deprivation, the person who wishes to help him must regard these feelings as important aspects of the personal problem. All too frequently, the feelings of the individual in question are ignored or given slight consideration. Factual data are obtained and the case is evaluated in terms of objective features, but this is not sufficient. The subjective elements must be given at least equal consideration. Sometimes it happens that the feelings are more important than the objective facts. In cases in which the person is unjustified in his feelings, they are still factors which must be considered.

The significance of discovering the individual's personal feelings regarding a situation is well illustrated in the case of a sixteen-year-old youth who lived in a mining community. He was handsome, had an admirable physique, and possessed athletic ability. He belonged in a superior group in intelligence and had a good school record. Actively sought by both boys and girls, he was responsive to their overtures. His home was average for the community, neither pretentious nor dilapidated. He had an attractive younger sister, of whom he seemed to be proud. His mother was the kind of mother boys in the community envied. She welcomed her son's friends, gave them ice cream, cookies, pie, or cake when they came to the house and then left the room, giving the youth free run of the rooms

they wished to use. She was active in community and school affairs and still had time for her children. B.'s father, who was a hard worker, held a responsible position in the mine in which he was employed. He supplemented his income by preaching in the small local Protestant church. Certainly, from an objective view, there seemed to be nothing lacking in B.'s home situation. A case worker would have given the home situation a high rating.

But B., by his conduct, indicated some deep-seated conflict. His school-work fell markedly, he became truant, he worried his parents deeply by frequently getting drunk. He got into sexual difficulties with some recent graduates of the local high school. He was heartily condemned by the adults of his community, and his peers began to consider it somewhat risqué to associate with him. He was finally arrested for disturbing the peace in a drunken brawl in a pool hall. It was the juvenile officer to whom he was remanded who discovered the cause of B.'s troubles—a feeling of shame and resentment toward his father. It irritated him to be called "Preach," or preacher's son, and he had engaged in the alcoholic and sexual episodes to convince his peers that, whatever his father might be, he was certainly not a sissy. This case was not solved through writing, but it does show that the feelings—often expressed, or disguised, in writing—are extremely significant.

PRECAUTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Writing Does Not Always Indicate a Problem. Much of the foregoing material has emphasized the value of creative writing for those who have problems. Actually, freedom of expression through writing is of inestimable benefit to the "normally" developing individual. It enlarges his horizons. It opens avenues for the expression of the various facets of personality. It gives one a chance to develop his capacities. Without doubt many children—perhaps the majority—can endure the trifling tensions and ordinary obstacles they meet. Free writing for them is not a matter of therapy; it is a prophylactic.

One day a teacher noticed a small, much folded piece of yellow paper on her desk. A dandelion had been placed with apparent haste in a corner of the page, which contained the following poem:

See pure gold!
Why do people love it so?
And keep it in a store
When a yellow dandelion's
Purer, cheaper—so much more.
The metal is so hard and cold
This little weed's a better gold.

Any teacher might have been pleased by this poem. But in this instance there was unusual satisfaction, for the child who had composed the poem had been withdrawn, sensitive, and diffident; and this was her first really spontaneous expression. But it was not her last, for her teacher promptly used the poem as proof of her ability. The poem was shared and praised by her classmates, and the incident marked the beginning of a new life for this child—a life of security and successful endeavor.¹⁷

Every child—not just those faced with perplexing problems—can thrill to the joy of accomplishment that accrues from recognized creative effort. Every child, and an adult too, can clarify his thoughts and feelings about his milieu by capturing them in the written words. Every child can experience the joy of sharing, when his composition is read. Every child may expand his appreciation for the good, the true, and the beautiful by developing the precise vocabulary that fits his feelings. Every child can profit from knowing that those swelling pressures of appreciation for the beautiful are shared, commendable, and eminently worth while.

The feelings that are acted out in the creative process are, however, not always the socially disapproved resentments and hostilities. They are often the more positive feelings of love and affection which the child in his naïveté may be loathe to express more directly. They are often new and only partially formed ideas which the person cannot yet verbalize, but can only feel and experience. The creative process permits him to explore these new ideas and to live them out in a world uncritical and unbiased.¹⁸

The appreciative aspects, the exploratory values are just as deserving of attention from the mental hygiene viewpoint as are the corrective and cathartic values. But freedom, rapport, and teacher commendation are still requisite.

Writing Does Not Always Provide Release. It should be obvious that writing does not always reveal, or even attempt to hide, the pupil's feelings. Particularly in the upper grades and in high school, one's writing may be the mere performance of a task. The child writes what he thinks the teacher will appreciate or what will earn him a good grade. Of course, this too is an indication of personality trends, but the real person is so completely hidden that to attempt to analyze the writing is futile. It is therefore necessary to bear in mind that too much should not be read into anyone's creative products. There is too great likelihood that the work may be stereotyped in terms of what the one who is writing thinks is expected of him.

¹⁷ Paul A. Witty, *Reading in Modern Education*, Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1949, p. 96. By permission of the publisher.

¹⁸ Henry, *op. cit.*, p. 259. By permission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

It must be recognized that writing is not a panacea. For many it will have little or no meaning. But it is an approach that for many others will provide some release. For some it will give an opportunity to satisfy their creative urge. Still others will be able to explore their social and physical milieu with impunity. These advantages, limited though they may be, are worthy of consideration in a mental hygiene program that must, of necessity, have many, many approaches.

SUMMARY

Creative writing is only one of many ways to secure improved behavior and closer identification with school tasks, and for achieving a better understanding of children. It is particularly significant because a universal characteristic of people experiencing difficulty is that they cannot pointedly put their problems into words. Its significance also is drawn from the necessity for finding avenues for creativity in a society in which both work and recreation are so highly routinized and stereotyped. Additional importance is given to creative writing because it provides an opportunity for the safe release of vaguely realized but strongly felt tensions.

Creative writing can be used at all school-age levels. In fact, if the physical aspect of writing is minimized, it can be used at the preschool level. Teachers who have used it in the primary grades report that the pupils show an obvious glow of satisfaction when they see their own compositions or poems placed on the board or wall newspaper—or have them read to the entire class.

In addition to the satisfaction derived from creation and accomplishment, creative writing helps students to consolidate and intensify the learning experience they have. It gives them a chance to capture the beauty they see about them. Their feeling for other people and for nature tends to be raised to a higher level because it is necessary to capture their reactions in words.

High-school pupils, as they actively expand their social world, often encounter difficult personal problems. The teachers who have gained rapport with their students feel that written work allows them to release tensions that they are somewhat dubious about expressing—yet, when expressed, these are a means of gaining balanced activity and a wider perspective.

Suggestions for capitalizing on the advantages of creative writing are simple but important. It is necessary to keep criticism of form, punctuation, and usage at a minimum, though pupils often ask for help as they discover that they have ideas they wish to convey to others. It is vital that teachers should not show shock at the ethical values indicated in writings. Here again is seen the necessity of accepting children where

they are. It is necessary to give some direction, to suggest ideas and themes, but not to make prescriptions. A junior-high-school boy who was asked to write about "The Beauty of Spring" said, "I just couldn't get going." This suggests another aspect of writing—pupils must have something to write about. This need for vivid experiencing has been emphasized in previous sections of this book.

Certain precautions must be exercised if creative writing is to be of maximum value. It must be observed for what it is—a view of a many-faceted personality. It does not always indicate a problem. Nor does writing always serve as a release valve. Even pupils who do write freely and creatively must have other avenues of expression. Finally, it must be observed that the writing should be regarded as only one source of information—a source that must be supplemented with other data.

All in all, creative writing serves two major purposes. One is to give the pupil an avenue of expression, and the second is that others may better understand him by means of what he has written. Both are highly significant for the achievement of more vigorous mental health.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Explain the meaning of projective techniques, using the root of the word in your explanation. In what way is writing a projective technique?
2. Cite some ways in which contemporary life provides more opportunities for creativity than was formerly possible.
3. Describe some situation in which you have used writing (not necessarily compositions or poems) to relieve pent-up feelings.
4. Would you agree that preschool children can get healthy release through having their expressions recorded and read back to them? Why or why not?
5. Get some elementary teacher to bring to class and read some of the written work of his pupils. Try to see the character behind the writing and then have the teacher tell you what he knows of the pupil.
6. Borrow a diary from some willing adolescent and see if you can see any repetition or theme of feeling that is expressed. Offer some suggestions for improving the adolescent's understanding of himself.
7. Suggest some additional topics for adolescents to work with. Have other class members evaluate and improve the topics.
8. Discuss in class what you think the writer of "Pretty Anna May Malone" may have felt before and after he wrote.
9. Get some class member to bring a story, written by either an upper grade or a high-school pupil, for study and interpretation.
10. Formulate by group discussion a number of suggested steps for implementing creative writing at the elementary-school level. At the secondary-school level.
11. Why is it so necessary to have supplementary information about a pupil when attempting to interpret his writing?

12. Is it possible that writing might become an undesirable defense mechanism? Explain your answer.

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

APPLEGATE, MAUREE, *Helping Children Write*, Scranton, Pa.: International Textbook Company, 1949. 173 pp.

The subtitle—"Thinking Together about Children's Creative Writing"—suggests that the approach is exploratory rather than dogmatic. Suggestions for interpreting children's writing and for encouraging their productivity are given. Methods of teaching receive consideration.

COLE, NATALIE ROBINSON, *The Arts in the Classroom*, New York: The John Day Company, 1940. 137 pp.

This book would be pertinent reading for the chapter on art in the mental hygiene program. It is included here for the very fine (last) chapter dealing with creative writing. The author illustrates her emphasis in teaching elementary pupils how to express themselves with many examples. She tells how she explained to her pupils some of the feelings she had about her own girlhood characteristics.

CONRAD, LAWRENCE A., *Teaching Creative Writing*, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1937. 142 pp.

Professor Conrad's book was written with the Creative Writing Committee of the Commission on the Secondary School Curriculum of the Progressive Education Association. He deals with the setting for creative writing, including the teacher's orientation and the pupil's preparation. The necessity for experiences which lead to creative endeavor are emphasized. Pertinent only to the secondary-school level.

MILLARD, CECIL V., *Child Growth and Development in the Elementary School Years*, Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1951. 511 pp.

An excellent book dealing with many phases of the interrelated growth process. Chapters on Development of Creative Ability and Mental Hygiene from the Standpoint of Growth are of special value to the viewpoint expressed in this chapter.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Frisky, the Calf, Coronet Films, Inc., 65 East South Water, Chicago 1. (10 min, BW&C, sd.)

For kindergarten, primary, and intermediate pupils. Designed to stimulate youthful interest in the world about them. Shows how a film can be used to stimulate pupil expression.

How to Read a Book, Coronet. (10 min, BW&C, sd.)

Since impression as well as expression is a part of the creative act, improvement in reading plays an important role. Shows how to get information in an efficient manner.

Improve Your Handwriting, Coronet. (10 min, BW&C, sd.)

For intermediate grades and up. Shows how to improve the physical skill of writing. Presents fundamentals in an understandable manner.

Making Sense with Sentences, Coronet. (10 min, BW&C, sd.)

For junior- and senior-high-school and college-age students. The significance of complete sentences for improved understanding is emphasized. What a complete sentence is and how it contributes to "complete thoughts" are questions dealt with in the film.

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USING DRAMA AND PLAY

THERE ARE many techniques for achieving such an understanding of pupils that teachers may guide them to a fuller realization of their individual capacity. Some techniques will appeal to certain teachers because of their unique backgrounds, while others will be favored by their associates. Psychodrama and sociodrama, or role playing, are approaches to understanding that have earned praise from many who have given them a trial. It is certain that role playing will not solve all the problems of maladjustment and the need for creative expression that arise in the school. But the technique has proved to be an effective approach to many perplexing problems. For instance, it has been successfully used in marriage clinics. Prospective divorcees have been put back on "the road to happiness" by the attainment of a better understanding of human relationships and personal problems through role playing. Dramatic presentation has been used as a teaching technique—particularly effective in the social studies—at all levels of education, from the elementary grades through college. Teachers have used the "dramatic" approach to settle difficult problems of interpersonal relationships.

Role playing is effective, it is easy, and it is enjoyable. Expensive equipment is not necessary; in fact, it is not advisable. No extensive preparation is needed. The ingredients are simply a teacher who is willing to try something new and a few students who would like to have some fun.

Play analysis and play therapy are likewise techniques for understanding and creative expression. Personality analysis through play is an attempt to understand pupils' motivations by observing them in the untrammelled activity of play. Play therapy is the opening of an opportunity for the child to get rid of tensions by projecting his feelings in the neutral situation of "make-believe."

Play and psychodrama are opportunities for the expression of difficulties which are too complex for the individual to express in words. It requires considerable facility with language processes to describe precisely one's inner feelings and persistent tensions. It also requires a clarity of self-understanding that is difficult to accomplish. Play and drama per-

mit the expression of the vaguely formulated feelings that in more formalized situations could not be expressed. The freedom of the situation permits the individual to reveal his feelings without a fear of censure—this Marion McKenzie Font says in the following words: "Often he is unable to communicate his anxieties verbally but we may discover them, or clues to their existence, from his responses to projective technics. A projective technic is a device which enables the individual to project himself—fears, wishes, ambitions, hostilities, interests, anxieties, and insecurities—onto a more or less vague stimulus."¹ Play and drama, as described in this chapter, are projective techniques. How this projection takes place and how it can be used in the classroom are explained in this chapter.

THE MEANING AND USE OF PSYCHODRAMA

Definition of Terms. The word *psychodrama* connotes a situation in which an individual has an opportunity to live through, by active participation, some problem he has encountered. It involves physical action which goes beyond mere verbal expression or relatively passive listening. The psychodrama is concerned with the problem of a particular individual, but the activity involved must necessarily take place in a social situation. Spontaneity is an essential element of the process. The individual, to as great a degree as possible, must be freed from the inhibitions of adhering to prescribed form and content. He must be freed from feeling a need to have his actions approved, if he is to be spontaneous in action. The drama is therefore *unstructured*. That is, formally planned actions and precise words, though these are characteristic of drama, are not a part of the situation involved in psychodrama. There is, however, planning. The situation should be approximately described, but detailed prescription must be avoided. Psychodrama, then, may be defined as an unstructured but not unplanned role-playing situation in which a given individual actively and spontaneously lives through a problem he is experiencing.

Sociodrama is an extension of psychodrama. The elements involved are much the same, except that sociodrama is primarily concerned with some group problem—a social obstacle or defect in social functioning. "Sociodrama is an intensive, vivid *living through* of experiences of common concern to the group members—experiences which may have been cut short in life and blocked from full expression, leaving unresolved, buried emotional impact."² Actually, the distinction is more apparent than real. In

¹ Marion McKenzie Font, "How Anxiety Is Revealed in Responses to Projective Technics," *Journal of Exceptional Children*, Vol. 17 (February, 1951), p. 132. By permission of the publisher.

² Helen Hall Jennings, "Sociodrama as Educative Process" in *Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*, 1950 Yearbook of National Education Association, Asso-

using role playing for the solution of personal problems a social situation is involved. In using the unstructured dramatic situation for an insight into social problems the individual is frequently helped to achieve a better understanding of himself.

It will be well, since psychodrama is a projective technique, to outline a concept of the latter term. There are many kinds of projective techniques, but the common factor among them is the fact that the individual is asked or encouraged to respond to a formless, or unstructured, situation. What he sees in, or does to, the situation is therefore considered to be a projection of his own personality. For example, the Rorschach (the pioneer in the field of projective techniques) blots consist of symmetrical but meaningless ink blots. What the individual sees in a particular blot is due less to the blot than to what the individual brings, in the way of personality trends, to the perception of the blot. Thus, what the subject sees in the blot, how he responds in a dramatic situation, how he uses toys (that could be used in a wide variety of ways), what he spontaneously draws, or what he sees in a picture provide the observer with clues to personality characteristics. The subject is unable to determine the real purpose the experimenter has in mind for placing him in the "projective" situation. He is made to feel as free as possible to respond as he spontaneously wishes to act. Because he is allowed to express himself freely, it is presumed that he behaves toward the unstructured field in terms of his own structured personality. In short, the form given to the formless situation is an extension, a projection, of the respondent's own motivations.

Elements Involved in Psychodrama. Freedom is an essential part of the psychodramatic technique. This includes space for freedom of movement, as well as psychological freedom. A cleared space on the floor will suffice, but it is advantageous to use a raised platform since that will increase the uniqueness of the drama. The elevation adds to the impression that the situation is not a duplication of one's own status. However, the important feature is still that of having sufficient room, so that all characters have space in which to move.

Some players are needed. The more characters that can be willingly drawn from the group, the better. No pressure should be placed on the individual for whom the psychodrama is designed to get him to participate. It is to be hoped that, as he sees the other youngsters having fun, he will wish to take part, too. There should be as many actors as the stage and the situation will accommodate, but the remainder of the group are not mere passive observers. They should be called upon for suggestions, for criticism, and for evaluation. All the members of the group should feel that they have a part in the production. The objective for the players and

for the teacher is not that of dramatic entertainment but communication between the actors.

Some orientation is required. The teacher should define the situation, but should not suggest any solutions. When the general nature of the problem is understood, he should step aside and allow the actors to improvise. Words of encouragement are in order, but suggestions or questions are likely to thwart spontaneity and inhibit free activity.

The essential elements involved in psychodrama, when it is used as an approach to the resolving of social conflicts, may be summarized as follows: (1) Setting the scene by selecting for study something the youngsters have read or something to parallel or duplicate an actually experienced conflict; (2) reviewing the story or verbally reconstructing the incident, preparatory to having role players volunteer; (3) the presentation of the scene by pupils; (4) analysis by the group of the situation as it was played by the actors; (5) reenactment of the conflict, with a view to improving the relationships; (6) teacher-pupil discussion and evaluation of the patterns of behavior which were witnessed.

Role playing gives the youngster who needs training in some situation a chance to practice in a neutral setting, where he can perform without danger of failure. Parents have used the technique in preparing their children for a trip to the dentist or in anticipation of a tonsillectomy. Teachers can use it to prepare for some new experience; *i.e.*, desirable conduct on a long bus trip, proper behavior on a conducted tour of an industrial plant, or the like. It has been observed that there is considerable carry-over from the practice scene to the actual situation. It is this carry-over that makes dramatic techniques so significant a tool in teaching technique, to say nothing of the variety that it can provide, thus enhancing the interest of the pupil in learning valuable personal skills. The pupil sees, hears, and feels a specific situation instead of having to perceive it through words alone.

This latter point is often stressed in educational psychology by such a statement as "Learnings are specific." That is, individuals gain real insight when they deal with definite, perceivable, and concrete situations, instead of depending upon verbal abstractions. Instead of the teacher's moralizing about the distinction between right and wrong, the pupils themselves modify their behavior by participating in a situation in which approved responses may be exemplified or disapproved responses may be objectified. Writers in the field of role playing feel that the viewpoints developed in the dramatic situation have strong carry-over values to other similar situations.

Objectives of Psychodrama. Psychodrama, as an approach to better mental health, is an attempt to help the individual avoid two common, but

harmful, responses. First, it seeks to avoid the accumulation of tensions, which are an inevitable result of vigorous living. Second, it seeks to replace resorting to defense mechanisms (fantasy, overcompensation, delinquency, excessive irritability) with a more constructive resolution of difficulties. Thus, psychodrama is frequently an attempt to encourage spontaneous expression of partially formed feelings of hostility.

Psychodrama, as a teaching technique, is an instrument of effective motivation and a means of developing truly sympathetic understanding. Another educational objective of psychodrama is to encourage creative expression. Elsewhere in this volume it is noted that the great increase in available leisure time and the type of diversity that occupies this time makes the problem of creative expression an acute one. That is, commercialized, routine, and passively receptive kinds of leisure-time pursuits make it increasingly important that creative activities become highly specific educational objectives.

Psychodrama is another approach to the meeting of individual differences. There are some who will find verbal expression an easy and natural response. Some youngsters are capable of painting or drawing situations that give the teacher a better understanding of them. Others are willing and able to respond in a counseling situation. But no one technique will satisfactorily reach all children. Even if these observations were not true, there would still be the advantage of presenting a challenging variety of meaningful situations to relieve what too frequently becomes a monotonous situation. The psychodrama can offer additional variety.

Psychodrama, as can thus be seen, has a threefold objective: It is a means of diagnosing the vaguely felt difficulties of some individuals; it is designed to provide therapy through the active release of tensions in a situation where freedom is encouraged; and it affords an excellent learning situation, because it involves personal participation. It presents an opportunity to anticipate situations, thus offering what might be called a trial run of human behavior. It provides a chance for practice in human relations and for practice in solving problems. One report dealing with psychodrama as a teaching device states:

Because of their study of the people [Japanese], the characters spoke extemporaneous lines with feeling. . . . For building understanding of people, for stimulating independent thinking, for providing a channel for imagination and controlled emotion and for training in expressing ideas freely and effectively, the creative play has a real contribution to make to the citizen of tomorrow.³

³ W. L. Ward, "Dramatics as a Creative Force," *School Executive*, Vol. 69 (August, 1950), p. 55. By permission of the publisher.

THE TEACHER'S USE OF PSYCHODRAMA

Preparation for the Psychodrama. Whatever the grade level in which the psychodramatic technique is to be used, there should be a discussion of the nature of the project. It deals with problems with which all class members are in some way acquainted. It offers a chance to act in the situations as the pupils would spontaneously behave. Situations and characters are taken out of life. It is a way of learning how others feel. These factors are brought into relief through discussion and questioning rather than by telling. As the pupils get experience in role playing, the significance of what they are doing should be reiterated, so that there will be an increasing understanding of what is being sought.

The theme for the presentation must be one that involves persons who feel somewhat as the would-be performers feel. The theme might come as the result of what the pupils are studying in school; *i.e.*, the life of an immigrant, a visit to an orphanage, the employment of a member of some minority group. It might come as the result of some incident that has occurred on the playground or some incident that has made the headlines of the newspapers. W. L. Ward suggests such topics as "What daddies do all day long," "How the safety patrol works," or "What they are going to do on Halloween."⁴ Perhaps a story is read and discussed or the theme may come as the result of the discussion of some incident a pupil has related.

The foregoing indicates that a *representative* situation must be chosen. The next requirement is that the pupils must want to take part. After the situation has been described, the teacher will call for volunteers for the various characters that have been indicated. If any youngster says that he does not feel like playing, that is sufficient reason for his being excused, though the teacher should look for a chance to involve him in the situation sometime later, perhaps in a different role from the one he had shunned.

The third requirement concerns the attitude of the teacher. Not only the students, but the teacher, too, must feel enthusiastic about the presentation, so that an atmosphere of freedom will be created. The results will be unsatisfactory if the pupils feel that they have to participate, or that they must act in a way that will gain the approval of the teacher.

Selecting the Theme. Sociodrama involves a warming-up process. This will be done in a variety of ways, depending on the cultural situation and the maturity of the pupils. It involves an answer to the question, "What are your problems?" but not in such words. The following representative questions are suggested by Helen Hall Jennings:

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

1. What situations are there in which you think you don't now know how to deal with what happens and in which you wish things would happen differently? *When does this kind of situation come up and who is in it with you?*
2. In what situations do you find someone doesn't understand you as well as you would like?
3. In what situations do you find someone understands you very well, just as much as you would like?
4. In what situations do you find it hard to decide what to do or to make up your mind what to do or say—seem not able to express yourself?
5. In what situations do you go right ahead and have no difficulty making up your mind what to do or say?
6. What situations come up which make you angry or very much annoyed?
7. What situations come up in which someone gets very annoyed or angry at you?
8. What situations happen to you which make you very happy?
9. What situations happen to you which make you very sad? ⁵

It can be seen from the above that there is an attempt to make the situation quite specific. The characters—age, sex, and status—are carefully defined. The situation is clearly outlined. The exact locale of the incident is determined. But the actions to be portrayed and the words to be spoken are not discussed—these are to be an outcome of the spontaneous feelings of the participants.

Enacting the Situation. There can be no prescription for this item. The participants must be allowed to—encouraged to—enact what they feel. It is no time to stress grammatical correctness. It is not a time to censure actions or feelings. In fact, it is desirable for the participants to release their feelings, because it is through this release that they get a better understanding of themselves and others.

The Follow-up. After the original presentation, the teacher encourages a discussion and criticism of what has been portrayed. Further analysis of the situation and the actions is made. Recommendations for improvement are suggested and discussed. A second presentation is thus prepared and a new cast of characters is selected. Those chosen must again be volunteers—perhaps by this time some of those who were originally reticent may wish to participate, but in roles somewhat removed from those they would be taking in the real situation. The repetition of the scene, with the discussion and analysis, will contribute toward thorough learning of the situation, which will make for the greatest transfer into the real problems of the pupils.

⁵ Jennings, *op. cit.*, pp. 271–272. By permission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

The Teacher's Use of Psychodrama. A group of sixth-grade boys were playing a game of football on the school ground. A Japanese boy in tackling one of the participants tore the latter's new Roy Rogers shirt. The owner of the shirt was very much disturbed but, although he was strong, he was too cautious to engage in battle with the Japanese. It was easy for him, a recognized leader in the group, to enlist the aid of some of his mates in thoroughly roughing up the unfortunate offender. When the boys returned to the classroom, the teacher realized that something had happened but she asked no questions. When the story leaked out in a few days, the teacher felt that an injustice had been done. She decided to use the psychodrama to see if the situation could be clarified. She asked whether the pupils would like to put on a little skit, and many thought it would be fun. Next she outlined a situation—"a little Negro boy has just entered school and has few friends. Who would like to take the part of the Negro?" One of the pals of the boy with the torn shirt volunteered. "Our scene is in the art room and there are several groups working, some are making a cooperative mural. I'd like to have three boys work on this mural." Volunteers were obtained. "Two other boys are working on a model airplane. Who will this be?" Torn shirt and another wanted that role. "Now our Negro is by himself, working on some finger painting, and after working awhile he spills some paint and it splashes on the new trousers that one of the mural workers is planning to wear to a Cub Pack meeting immediately after school. You take it from there."

The boys knew their teacher and they entered the situation heartily. There was a resentful response from the wearer of the "soiled trousers." And the finger painter responded in kind. Others got into the scene and there was some pushing. After a few minutes the rest of the class was asked to criticize and comment. Some immediately pointed out that the spilling was accidental. Arguments ensued but they were hopeful rationalizations rather than convictions. The scene was replayed with new participants, though the teacher said that the original players had really got into their parts. When the scene was given the second time, it was acknowledged that soiled trousers had been hurt but that he might be more gentlemanly in his behavior. The offender expressed regret over the incident and volunteered to help clean up.

The teacher was not content to let the lesson be indirect. She proceeded to discuss the situation of the torn shirt as she had heard it. There were some attempts at justifying the rough retaliation, but the consensus was that the action had been unjust. The leader of the group, finally admitting that he had been wrong, decided to apologize and shake hands. His action was acclaimed by students and teacher. The teacher felt that the resulting situation was far more satisfactory than overlooking the incident, or re-

questing an apology, or even holding a heart-to-heart discussion would have been. She was certain that moralizing would have had little effect.

The foregoing incident is not intended to furnish a pattern, but to indicate that the technique is relatively simple, as far as classroom use is concerned, though correction of a chronic situation or some deep-seated personality trait would require more extensive treatment. The teacher was willing to try, she had previously planned, but she also had to improvise. Once the scene was set, however, the pupils took over competently and with commendable results. The situation could have been occasioned by some act of interpupil discourtesy, by failure to carry out a designated and reasonable responsibility, or by an argument over who should have first choice in using a reference simultaneously sought by two pupils.

Suggested Situations for the Use of Role Playing. Psychodrama and sociodrama can be used as supplements to other teaching and understanding mediums. They can, for instance, be used to anticipate some activity. If a bus trip is being planned, children can be asked to act out their conduct during the journey—boarding and leaving the bus and arranging for seating. Similarly, conduct during a directed tour of some industrial or business establishment can be anticipated. Youngsters can be encouraged to show how they would like orchestra members to act when they come from another school to present a program. This will give them insight as to how to behave when they are the visitors.

Understanding and feeling for others can be improved. This may involve a thoughtful attitude toward a stutterer, someone who has cerebral palsy, or a crippled child who is to become a member of their class. The class can be helped to realize how any newcomer can be made more comfortable. This feeling for others might well include some orientation to understanding how adults react to the activities of youngsters.

Role playing can be used to promote emotional control. Youngsters will profit from seeing how their own temper tantrums, pouting, pushing, and fighting appear in the eyes of their classmates. Emotional control may also be improved through the tension release that is provided in the vicarious activity of dramatic play. Conflict situations can be resolved by seeking improved avenues of approach (though this may not be an aim of the pupils). This was seen in the torn-shirt situation. Other conflicts may involve obedience to the teachers, respecting other's property rights, and priority in the use of classroom equipment.

Learning situations that have become routine may be enlivened by the acting out of some of the supplementary aspects, e.g., historical and literary incidents. This will have the added advantage of stimulating spontaneous and creative response.

Dramatic situations are frequently used to aid in the overcoming of

fears. The pupil's attitude toward academic examinations or visual, dental, and medical examinations might be depicted. The pupil's attitude toward the principal might properly become the subject of role-playing techniques.

USING PLAY FOR EXPRESSION AND UNDERSTANDING

Play is the natural response and activity of childhood. There was a time in the not-far-distant past when at least some persons regarded play as a useless time consumer. This view today is definitely set aside. In fact, play is regarded as an entirely essential part of wholesome child development; and those responsible for the guidance of children are strongly advised not to underestimate the vital significance of play in the rounded growth of physical, emotional, mental, and social characteristics.

Dead is the old pedagogy which contended that a child was not studying until he mastered lessons which he hated. The identification of play with the useless in life has gone. With this identification it was necessary either to abandon play or to justify it; for this reason most of the theories of play, as we have found, were utilitarian. Children are being taught to enjoy what they do in school as well as what they do on the playground. Play needs no justification; it is merely the name given to the activities of life which are interesting to the participant, and any activity can be of this sort.⁶

It is the purpose of this section to acquaint the reader with the results of contemporary thinking and experimentation in the area of play as a tool for better education and as an avenue toward more vigorous mental health. Suggestions are given for utilizing play as something more than physical exercise—though that, too, is of real importance.

Using Play for Understanding. Play may be regarded as a projective technique. From it, as such, the observer gets clues regarding the player's motivations from the activities performed in the free atmosphere of play.

You can learn from what the children play. Give them ample time for make-believe. This will tell you where they are ripe to go ahead. It can suggest the books they will get the most out of hearing; the trips they are ready for you to take them on; the ideas they want to talk over and develop.

Children need play-time and you need it too. This is listening and seeing and observation-time for you. You pick up clues on where they are most ready to begin.⁷

⁶ John J. B. Morgan, *Child Psychology*, 3d ed., New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1942, p. 447. By permission of the publisher.

⁷ James L. Hymes, Jr., *A Pound of Prevention*, New York: New York Committee on Mental Hygiene of the State Charities Aid Association, 1947, p. 54. By permission of the author and the publisher.

As the teacher watches a baseball contest, a game of tag, or youngsters playing house, he will see that some are characteristically hostile and noncooperative while others are friendly and cooperative. The behavior in such situations is not invariably a symptom of personality, but observation creates an awareness of what to look for. Hostility and obstreperousness are not native endowments but are clearly the result of experience and reactions to experiences that are peculiar to the individual.

Knowing the child's behavior pattern, the teacher can devise play situations that will reveal more clearly the advantages or handicaps the child has encountered. For example, a group of primary youngsters can be encouraged to play house. Some who play mothers will be kind to their doll children, will talk to them and humor them when they "cry." Others will be cross, will spank their babies and threaten them with "bad men" or with promises to put them to bed. The boys who play father will show similar patterns. Some will help with the dishes, rock the baby, and converse about what went on during the working day. Other "fathers" will settle down in a chair to read and will loudly demand silence of others in the household. These things the teacher already knows, having seen such play activities many times. What is not so thoroughly appreciated is that such scenes can give valuable insight into behavior. Consequently, some teachers (and some parents, too) have a tendency to try to correct behavior by suggesting, "That's not the way to act toward your little girl," "It would be nicer if you spoke kindly toward your husband," or "You should try to make everybody in the home happy."

It would be much more likely to improve mental health if teachers and parents were to reflect on the significance of the statements, "Child behavior reflects parental handling" and "Pupils' actions reflect teacher attitudes." The clues obtained from play situations would lead to a more thorough search for the fundamental causes of undesirable behaviors. Improved behavior could then result from the removal of aggravating situations, instead of depending on futile platitudes such as, "People will not like you unless you are nice." Until the circumstances which lead to the undesirable behavior are altered, it is likely that the child will not greatly care whether others do or do not like him.

The film *This Is Robert*⁸ shows, among other things, play as a means of improved understanding. Robert, age 5 or 6, was given a sizable jar of cold cream. He was covered with an apron and placed on a large sheet of paper. He was told simply, "Do what you want with it." He proceeded vigorously to spread the cold cream all over the paper, then he skated in it, placed a dab or two on the wall, and then began to work on the floor beyond the confines of the paper. The interpretation of this action, coupled with similar observances in other play situations and supplemented

⁸ New York University Film Library, 26 Washington Square, New York 20.

with objective information, was that Robert felt the need to explore to the utmost the boundaries of his freedom. He wanted to see just how far he could go before being controlled. Here was only a clue—the cause of his need to find the limits of freedom was undetermined. Investigation indicated that he was the son of professional parents, his care was largely turned over to a succession of nursemaids and to grandparents who were at times indulgent and at times demanding. His reaction was to find out in every situation how far he could go before being reprimanded. A step toward remedying this tendency was a talk with the parents as to the need for a healthier regime. Further, it was felt that there should be some improvement in the catharsis, the expression, that was afforded in the permissiveness of his many play and school activities. Throughout the picture, teachers are shown attempting to understand each child from “reading” his activities, including play.

Basic Principles of Nondirective Play Therapy. Even though the teacher cannot be expected to transform the classroom into a play-therapy situation, it will be instructive to examine some of the basic principles which the successful therapist must recognize and utilize. The teacher's responsibility for numbers of pupils makes it impossible for him to give attention to only one or two, in need of special help. However, an attempt to approximate play therapy may, and does, contribute to preventive or prophylactic measures which are beneficial to all children. Both Carl R. Rogers and Virginia Mae Axline have formulated some basic principles. The following statement is that of Miss Axline:

1. The therapist must develop a warm, friendly relationship with the child, in which good rapport is established as soon as possible.
2. The therapist accepts the child exactly as he is.
3. The therapist establishes a feeling of permissiveness in the relationship so that the child feels free to express his feelings completely.
4. The therapist is alert to recognize the *feelings* the child is expressing and reflects those feelings back to him in such a manner that he gains insight into his behavior.
5. The therapist maintains a deep respect for the child's ability to solve his own problems if given an opportunity to do so. The responsibility to make choices and to institute change is the child's.
6. The therapist does not attempt to direct the child's actions or conversation in any manner. The child leads the way; the therapist follows.
7. The therapist does not attempt to hurry the therapy along. It is a gradual process and is recognized as such by the therapist.
8. The therapist establishes only those limitations that are necessary to anchor the therapy to the world of reality and to make the child aware of his responsibility in the relationship.⁹

⁹ Virginia Mae Axline, *Play Therapy*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1947, pp. 75-76. (Each of these principles, summarized in her Chap. 7, is elaborated in the following chapters; i.e., Chaps. 8-15, pp. 77-138.) By permission of the publisher.

A look at the above principles will show that many of them have been anticipated in other parts of this book. These are sound principles of mental hygiene that are pertinent not to play therapy alone, but to mental hygiene in general. There is a need for an atmosphere of friendliness, but that it is all too frequently absent from the classroom has been noted. In discussion of the needs of humans in general and the needs of children specifically, the value of acceptance has been stressed. Although permissiveness, as such, is mentioned only in this chapter, the necessity for giving the pupil an appropriate degree of freedom has been mentioned as a basic ingredient of harmonious growth processes. While "reflecting back" the feelings of the child has not been previously mentioned, stress has been placed upon the value of a sincere and continuous effort to understand the feelings of children. Respect for the child's ability to solve his own problems has been anticipated in the passages devoted to freedom and the granting of responsibility. Although the idea of not attempting to influence the child's action cannot be put to use in all phases of classroom work, the importance of free expression is strongly emphasized in the chapters dealing with art mediums and creative writing. The futility of hurrying has been specifically stressed in the incidental discussions about fundamental characteristics of the growth process. The necessity for imposing limitations—but only those which are just and proper in terms of children's needs—has been treated in the chapter on constructive discipline.

It thus becomes apparent that implementing, to some degree, these basic principles of play therapy is not impossible. Many of them have been, and are being, utilized by classroom teachers in their daily work. Miss Axline gives point to this generalization when she says, "Looking about for the prophylactic measures necessary to prevent serious maladjustment on the part of the pupils, the schools have incorporated in their programs some very admirable developments."¹⁰ She encourages teachers to attempt to adopt, or at least to experiment with, them. "Yes, the therapeutic principles have implications for educators. They bring forth unbelievable results. Teachers are invited to try them out, if they haven't already done so many, many times."¹¹

Play as Group Therapy. The improvement of human relationships within groups is one of the recognized functions of education. It has been indicated that one criterion of mental health is a person's ability to get along harmoniously with others. Growth and development of individuals is greatly influenced by group values, feelings, and attitudes. The treatment of the mentally ill has been approached through techniques

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 141. By permission of the publisher.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 159. By permission of the publisher.

known as group therapy, and its effectiveness has been proved in many instances by marked improvement. The aim of such treatment is to bring about identification of the individual with such groups as the family, the play group, or members of the class. Fundamentally, the technique consists of giving the individual an opportunity to be himself freely, without fear of censure or disapproval.

It must be admitted that the classroom teacher cannot be a true therapist, because his responsibility to the class as a whole prevents his allowing children who are markedly maladjusted to do just as they please. "For anyone who has had much experience with normal children, especially in the atmosphere of a crowded classroom with the ever-present necessity of enforcing discipline, the assumption of these attitudes may prove particularly difficult."¹² However, devising play situations in which children are permitted to act freely, even for limited periods, may serve to give the teacher insight into the motivations of some who are not marked deviates but who are experiencing difficulties of adjustment. The neutral atmosphere of play will allow the child the opportunity to express some of his feelings and get rid of some of his tensions. He will, as the result of seeing how his projected feelings influence others, be taking a step toward his own self-understanding.

The elements of group play therapy are few in number. First, no individual need be aware that he is being studied by means of what he is saying and doing. He is simply one of the group participating. Second, a situation is outlined for the group. Pupils are given a story which they are to finish out in play. They may be asked to take their cues from a picture that is shown to them. After the "stage is set," the situation is described, the teacher assumes a detached attitude. He is calm, poised, and friendly with the participants, but he does not give praise for either words or actions. The atmosphere is one of permissiveness.

The teacher will establish a feeling of permissiveness in the relationship so that the child feels free to express his feelings and to be himself. In a therapeutic situation the child expresses his feelings completely. In a school-room situation there would of necessity be limits placed upon *complete* expression of feelings. It is in this area that progressive educators have departed to the greatest extent from traditional education. Progressive educators have recognized the value of releasing feelings of the child in some tangible expression—painting, clay work, creative writing, music, rhythms, drama, free play—all of these mediums are used as an outlet for the child's feelings. It was at this point, too, that many misconceptions of progressive education sprang up. The derisive term, "Let the little dears express them-

¹² Lydia Jackson and Kathleen M. Todd, *Child Treatment and the Therapy of Play*, 2d ed., New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1950, p. 56. By permission of the publisher.

selves," became an insulting byline for those people who lacked the understanding of child development to appreciate the value of self-expression.

When a teacher applies the basic principles of nondirective therapy to this free expression, she adds something of great importance to it. Free expression is not enough in itself to bring about insight for the child. The therapist-teacher is alert to recognize the feelings the child is expressing and reflects those feelings back to the child in such a manner that the child gains insight into his behavior. This can be done to a great extent in any classroom situation if the teacher has an understanding of her pupils and an insight into human behavior. If the therapeutic relationship has been established between pupil and teacher, many children may be helped to gain valuable insight into their problems before the problems become so unwieldy that they create serious maladjustment.¹³

Reflecting the child's feelings does not require criticism or approval. It is merely a means of stressing the child's expressions. "You do not like your sister," "You are getting along fine," "You want to make someone angry" are statements which reflect but which imply no criticism. As the child projects his feelings through play situations, he gradually gains a better understanding of their effect on others. Even if he expresses no concern about others, the teacher knows that such assertions are fronts that fail to cover the fundamental desire to be approved and accepted.

Play as a Teaching Device. The basic principles of nondirective play therapy have been successfully used as an approach to the improvement of learning processes. Robert E. Bills experimented with retarded readers, some of whom gave evidence of emotional maladjustment and some of whom were regarded as well adjusted. In both instances, he concluded that reading improvement could take place in a relatively short time by capitalizing on the basic principles outlined by Axline, summarized in the above section.

Taking a group of third-graders who were retarded in reading and who manifested emotional maladjustment, Bills worked with them individually and in groups with the play technique. For the first three weeks, the children worked with the experimenter in forty-five-minute individual sessions once a week. During the last three weeks, he had individual sessions and group sessions, so that during the entire six weeks' period each child had about six individual sessions and two or three group sessions (depending on regularity of attendance). Both group and individual sessions were of forty-five minutes each. "As a result of play therapy experience it was concluded: (1) significant changes in reading ability occurred as a result of the play therapy experience, (2) personal changes may occur in as little as six individual and three group play ther-

¹³ Axline, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-144. By permission of the publisher.

apy sessions, and (3) there appears to be no common personality maladjustment present in this group of retarded readers."¹⁴ He felt that the improvement was due to the release of emotional tensions in general, which enabled the pupil to use his natural abilities to fuller advantage.

Bills later experimented with retarded readers who gave no marked evidence of emotional maladjustment, though there were in some cases minor personality disturbances. The results were similarly encouraging. "(1) Significant increases in reading ability resulted from a nondirective therapy treatment of the emotional maladjustments which some retarded readers exhibit. (2) The gains in subject matter ability are directly proportional to the amount of emotional maladjustment present in the child. (3) When a child gains from nondirective therapy his gain is well-rounded and not specific to any one subject matter field."¹⁵

The last point is of particular interest to the classroom teacher because it indicates that the personality strength obtained from an atmosphere of permissiveness, friendliness, acceptance, and leisureliness tends to promote all-round adjustment. This adjustment makes it possible for the child to capitalize more fully on his potentialities and thus to give a good account of himself. The wisdom of using such an approach is reflected in the words of Frederick H. Allen, psychiatrist, "The considerable body of literature that has developed on this aspect of therapy has centered mainly on the therapeutic value of play, the child's most natural medium of expression. Since it is essential to provide a child with the opportunity to use his natural tools and modes of expression, we see at once that play activity is an important factor in therapeutic work with children."¹⁶

The play technique has been successful in the improvement of speech habits, as well. Many speech problems, as we all know, are caused—or, at least, aggravated—by emotional pressures. When children detect disapproval of their vocal expressions, they come to think of themselves as being disapproved and condemned. But in the play atmosphere they gradually realize that they need not be perfect in order to be accepted. When they are loved and respected in spite of their imperfections, they gain a feeling of security that makes them more eager to show improvement that will be commended. All the basic principles of play therapy point toward the development of such basic inner security.

¹⁴ Robert E. Bills, "Nondirective Play Therapy with Retarded Readers," *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, Vol. 14 (April, 1950), p. 148. By permission of the American Psychological Association.

¹⁵ Robert E. Bills, "Play Therapy with Well-adjusted Retarded Readers," *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, Vol. 14 (August, 1950), p. 249. By permission of the American Psychological Association.

¹⁶ Frederick H. Allen, M.D., *Psychotherapy with Children*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1942, p. 122. By permission of the publisher.

Play as a Builder of Morale. In the primary and elementary grades the cautious classroom teacher can make good use of play techniques. The make-believe situations that are spontaneously created by children can be observed with an eye to discovering their inner feelings. When children are allowed to express their hostilities and resentments without censure, some tensions can be released. If they wish to handle their blocks and dolls roughly in the kindergarten, it may be well for them to feel free to do so. Quite possibly, this will be better than storing up the negative feelings, only to have them burst forth in outright attack on playmates. In the elementary grades, the children can express their feelings in the games they play. Boys should be permitted to play roughly with one another in their football games and cowboy and robber activities. Hasty interference in the name of socialized conduct can prevent girls from giving expression to their feelings in their free-play activities.

It will be necessary, in the classroom, to place restrictions on the expression of hostilities, but this should not call for complete repression. The basic elements of play therapy can be employed. That is, the teacher should accept the child as he is. Perhaps he is antagonistic and resentful and manifests laziness. But his behavior can be changed, and it will be most likely to change in a favorable direction if he is not rejected because of his present objectionable conduct. The teacher can be friendly. The resultant warmth will do much to provide for those individual differences which we talk about so much but do so little about. The teacher can seek to recognize and understand the feelings of a child. Though he should not attempt to read too much into the behavior of free play, he can get clues to understanding that can then be corroborated by other sources of data—reports from other teachers, personal conversation, cumulative records, discussions with parents, and the like. More permissiveness in the selection and carrying out of school tasks can be granted. This will have the double advantage of freeing the child and of stimulating his growth toward desirable educational aims.

LIMITATIONS AND PRECAUTIONS

The use of psychodrama, sociodrama, and play as analytic and therapeutic measures is a job for specially trained clinicians. It is not expected, nor to be desired, that teachers should turn their classrooms into clinics.

Far more harm than good results from false interpretations; so that, unless the teacher is especially trained, she should not attempt to interpret seriously, or to correct the deeper-lying emotional conflicts of individual children. As soon as possible, however, every teacher who presumes to do even a reasonably adequate job of personal guidance with her children should be-

come familiar with the potentialities of projective technics as a means of understanding and helping personality growth in her pupils.¹⁷

The danger is not in using the techniques. Psychodrama and play have their place in the classroom. The danger is in overinterpretation. Much play will be a matter of imitation. Participation in a dramatic situation does not necessarily mean expression of personal feelings. The actor may sincerely be trying to do what he thinks the character would do—and his thoughts might stem from having read or heard about the situation. If every child seems to be suffering from pent-up emotions, it is probably time to completely abandon the technique.

These techniques should not be thought of as panaceas. In spite of the teacher's doing all he can to create a friendly and permissive atmosphere, there may still be hidden tensions within the pupil. The fact that progress has been made by some pupils with their problems does not mean that all problems have been solved. There must be a continuing search for approaches that will fit the immediate situation and the particular individual. Moreover, it is entirely possible that some children need to feel that their conduct is censored. The fact that someone cares enough about them to be concerned about their conduct may give them an additional sense of security.

The classroom cannot become a psychological laboratory. The desire to help a child who is experiencing difficulties should not be allowed to obscure the ever-present responsibility for directing the growth of happy and energetic children—those who make up the bulk of the classroom population. It may be unfortunate, but permissiveness for one may have to be limited in the interest of the welfare of the entire group. Here the precaution becomes a matter of balance. Permissiveness leading to destruction and personal attack must be avoided. Restrictiveness leading to dependence and submission must likewise be avoided. Unless children have the opportunity to learn how far they can go in solving their own problems, they cannot learn the invaluable lesson of independence.

When these precautions are held in mind, the techniques become an interesting field for experimentation—one that will result in professional growth, besides providing additional opportunities for pupil growth. The fact that there are dangers and limitations should not be allowed to intimidate the teacher. There are dangers involved in the teaching of arithmetic and reading, too, if the teacher is lacking in kindness, humility, and sincerity. The necessity for understanding children is so great that no opportunity to expand this understanding should be overlooked.

¹⁷ Marian E. Breckenridge and E. Lee Vincent, *Child Development*, 2d ed., Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1949, p. 137. By permission of the publisher.

SUMMARY

Role playing and free play are projective techniques that have been developed in clinical situations, but which have implications for classroom teachers. They are devices that help get beneath behaviors which the individual himself does not understand very well and which, consequently, he cannot express verbally.

Psychodrama is a projective technique in which an attempt is made to understand an individual, or permit the release of his feelings. However, such role playing involves others and is closely akin to sociodrama, which is a technique for understanding and helping groups of individuals.

Role playing involves certain basic elements, *i.e.*, actors who are willing to identify themselves with the situation, an orientation to the situation (oral description by the teacher or the reading of a story), the acting out of the situation, analysis and evaluation by the players and the audience, and reenactment and evaluation by pupils and teacher.

The objectives may be summarized by saying that it is an attempt to help pupils grow harmoniously. Role playing stimulates personal contact, it offers practice in verbal communication in ordinary but vital situations, it gives an opportunity to engage in cooperative endeavor, and it stimulates mutual respect.

Free play is based on the idea that what an individual is doing is less important than his liberty to act freely and explore his environment vigorously. Since the child spontaneously plays as he feels, play provides an opportunity to gain insight into feelings that are too perplexing to be expressed orally.

The basic elements of free play are synonymous with good teaching method and sound teacher personality. Friendliness and warmth characterize the teacher-pupil relationship. The child is accepted as he is. There is freedom for the child to express his inner feelings and thus grow in understanding of himself. Patience to wait on the slow process of growth is involved in play therapy and in educational achievement.

Free play can be used as a teaching device. The resolving of inner tensions through having the opportunity to play freely and vigorously fosters a degree of personality relaxation that allows a child "to do as well as he can."

Since play and psychodrama are clinical techniques, the classroom teacher who attempts to use them—and the attempt should be made—must observe certain precautions. Among these are the following: (1) The temptation to overinterpret—to see too much in the behavior—must be avoided. (2) Permissiveness should not be so great as to endanger children or property, but neither should restriction be so great as to inhibit the growth of healthy independence. (3) The classroom must not become a

clinic. There are too many children who are normally healthy and happy to make it reasonable for one child who is encountering difficulty to monopolize the teacher's time. However, if these precautions are observed, the techniques can become a valuable means of achieving better understanding of children; and the better our understanding is, the more likely we are to become salutary emotional influences.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. In what ways are play and creative drama similar to creative writing, painting, and drawing?
2. Distinguish between drama, sociodrama, and psychodrama.
3. Discuss with your classmates the psychological orientation prerequisite to the successful use of sociodrama.
4. Try, together with your fellow students, to formulate a one-sentence summary of the objectives of psychodrama.
5. Organize a committee to plan the outline for a sociodrama and experiment with its production in class.
6. Suggest a number of school situations that might possibly be clarified by employing sociodrama.
7. What implications for parents do you see in the contemporary view of the developmental significance of play?
8. Observe a group of youngsters (any age) at play. What questions are raised which you think would merit more serious investigation?
9. Give your own evaluation of the proposition that free play has therapeutic value, even without understanding the child's limitations.
10. Which of the basic principles of nondirective play therapy do you think would be of little practical value to the classroom teacher?
11. Describe some instances in which you have seen play used as a teaching technique.
12. Can play be used as a morale builder, even though the teacher is not acquainted with the basic factors of play therapy?
13. Can you think of any additional limitations, other than those mentioned in the chapter, to the use of free play by classroom teachers?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

AXLINE, VIRGINIA MAE, *Play Therapy*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1947. 379 pp.

The subtitle, "The Inner Dynamics of Childhood," indicates the thesis of this book. The deep-seated motivations of the child are seen and interpreted in the light of his play activities. Details concerning the use of play therapy are described and illustrated. The elements and limitations of this approach to child understanding are discussed.

HAAS, ROBERT BARTLETT, *Psychodrama and Sociodrama in American Education*, New York: Beacon House, Inc., 1949. 251 pp.

This book consists of a number of articles written by various authors. The articles are grouped into sections, such as, Projects in Elementary Education,

Projects in the Junior High School, and Projects in the Senior High School, which will interest teachers at the various levels. Counseling and sociometry as well as drama are discussed.

JACKSON, LYDIA, and KATHLEEN M. TODD, *Child Treatment and the Therapy of Play*, 2d ed., New York: The Ronald Press, 1950. 159 pp.

The authors seek to provide an improved understanding of the theory basic to play therapy. Although no suggestions are given for classroom teachers, a reading of the book will be invaluable to those who attempt to modify play techniques for everyday use. A new appreciation of the significance of the play life of a child will be achieved from a perusal of this volume.

Toward Better Teaching, 1949 Yearbook of National Education Association, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C., 1949, 282 pp.

This book is an important volume for those who would understand better the whole problem of mental health in school. It would be pertinent reading for many of the chapters of this volume. The chapter on Fostering Creativity has particular reference for the discussion of role playing and free play but goes beyond these creative activities to deal with music, writing, puppetry, and the like.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Frustration Play Techniques, New York University Film Library, 26 Washington Square, New York 20. (35 min, BW, sd.)

Demonstrates techniques developed by Dr. Eugene Lerner of Sarah Lawrence College. A series of games indicates how children respond to intrusions, prohibitions, and competition.

Play Is Our Business, Sun Dial Films, 341 East 43d St., New York. (20 min, BW, sd.)

The work of play schools in solving some of the community problems which affect children during after-school hours and in vacation periods. A variety of activities is shown with emphasis on the theme that for children work is play and play is work and both are integral parts of the learning process.

This Is Robert, New York University. (80 min, BW, sd.)

This film was also listed with Chapter 2. It is included here because of the several situations which are depicted, showing how play activities reveal personality. Playing with switches, trains, dollhouse equipment, cold cream, balloons, and packing boxes is shown and interpreted.

Understanding Children's Play, Educational Institute for Learning and Research, 65 East 96th St., New York. (10 min, BW, sd.)

Designed to show how adults can understand and help children through observation of their use of toys and play material.

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LIMITATIONS AND PRECAUTIONS REGARDING MENTAL HYGIENE

It is unlikely that mankind will ever discover all the secrets of successful living. The *key* to perfect mental health is probably as elusive as the Fountain of Youth, which Ponce de Leon sought. However, there seems to be substantial basis for hope that *ways* to better mental health can be attained. Now that much attention is being given to mental health, it is possible that progress, comparable to the progress in medical science in the last fifty years, will be more rapid. The theories and beliefs upon which we operate today will be refined—some of them will be discarded and new emphases will be added to others. In the meantime, it should be profitable to look at some of the factors which warn against going to extremes in accepting certain aspects of the mental hygiene viewpoint.

THE NEED FOR A BALANCED VIEW

Most Children Are Normal. This book has stressed the need for giving attention to kinds of behavior that deviate from what we call the normal. The very definition of *normal* indicates that deviations are the exceptional thing. Teachers must then remember that many of the case studies in mental hygiene treatises deal with only a small proportion of the population. We have been concerned, for the most part, with the *one* in the statement, "One out of every twenty of us is, has been, or will be in an institution for mental illness." Lest we develop an unbalanced view, it will be well, periodically, to reflect on the fact that there are nineteen out of the twenty who are in reasonably good mental health. Only by bearing in mind that there are many well-adjusted persons in both the school and the larger social environment can we maintain the perspective that is conducive to personal mental health. *Most children are normal.*

"One robin does not make a spring." One raindrop does not make a flood. One mentally unhealthy person does not make a neurotic society. One symptom does not make a mentally sick person. Even persons who are known to be in good physical health may have an occasional head-

ache, suffer a sprain from time to time, or now and then have trouble sleeping soundly. Anyone working in the field of human relationships, as do teachers, must realize that it takes a whole bundle of traits to make up the total personality.

Since there are some 40 million children in the U.S. under the age of 15; and since each of them has at least one disagreeable habit or behavior pattern, and more likely, several; and since the median of children per family is two; it therefore stands to reason that roughly 40 million U.S. parents are in more or less of a quandary.¹

There are two implications for teachers in the above statement. One is that some of these forty million children will manifest disagreeable habits in the classroom; and the other is that the "quandary" in which the teacher finds himself in dealing with problems is a "normal" situation. Relying on the record of the past, we can expect that many, indeed most, of these children will grow into normal adults.

Discarded Theories May Be Proved Valid. The need for a balanced view of the theories of mental hygiene is demonstrated by the fact that some of our older theories may again become popular. The belief that children should be loved, cuddled, and indulged was popular in our grandmothers' day. In the 1920's the opinion prevailed that satisfying the child's physical needs was sufficient. It was felt that spoiling the child could be avoided by failing to pick him up when he cried, by giving him no sympathy when he got bumped, and by sticking to a strict schedule when his whim varied from the clock. Today the consensus is toward showering him with love and meeting both psychological and physical needs.

A firm hand which was capable of dealing out some well-deserved punishment was once considered to be requisite to intelligent parenthood. Later, the popular theory was that punishment should be strictly avoided and that substitute activities should be sought for the wayward child. Neither theory has been uniformly accepted or rejected. Many books on child development are today reservedly admitting that, quite conceivably, punishment may not do the child any harm—in fact, it may be of real benefit. Certainly, it is not easy to find unequivocal answers to the many problems that parents and teachers encounter in the complex job of providing the most beneficent influences for symmetrical child development. Those who formulate the theories cannot come to full agreement among themselves.

This does not imply that no guidance is afforded by the "experts." There seems to be little doubt that we are making progress. But past experience indicates, both in child raising and in formal education, that

¹ Robert Coughlan, "How to Survive Parenthood," *Life*, Vol. 28 (June 20, 1950), p. 114. By permission of the publisher.

the reaction to a particular theory (which has come to seem erroneous) is often so violent that the "swing of the pendulum" carries us into another extreme, almost as reprehensible as the original misinterpretation. It would seem reasonable to go on record for one theory, *i.e.*, that our new programs will continue to emphasize the need for attention to individual differences. Generalizations are instructive; but in wise guidance the personality characteristics of both guidee and guider must be considered. In short, together with the sound advice offered by "experts," there must be some common sense contributed by the daily practitioner.

Both Environment and Heredity Shape Personality. A balanced view of the interacting influences of both heredity and environment is fundamental to understanding the operation of mental health influences. Since it is the environment which we, as teachers, can modify, we cannot afford to lose faith in the stimulating and limiting values of that environment. All that we can do for children lies in the area of shaping their surrounding circumstances. At the same time, it is vital to remember that heredity sets limits for development. If this fact is not recognized, there is the possibility and the likelihood of losing hope regarding our effectiveness. Some of the best efforts of teachers come to naught. Overemphasis on environment may cause the generation of feelings of personal futility. It is likely to be felt that whatever changes in environment have been made are not the right ones. As a matter of fact, the changes brought about might have proved to be very wise ones, had not the scope of their effectiveness been so markedly limited by the restrictions on growth that were imposed by a particular child's hereditary capacity.

If an extreme view of the relative importance of either heredity or environment is accepted, there is a likelihood that the child will be harmed. On the one hand, an extreme environmentalist might tell a child the ghastly untruth, "You can do anything you want to, if you just work hard enough." Such a statement is more than a falsehood. It is an ultimately destructive belief. There are people who will *never* run 100 yards in ten seconds, who—no matter how much they practice—will never play like Artur Rubinstein or Fritz Kreisler, who could not pass the courses in a traditional college no matter how many years they might study. Heredity sets limits (we are not sure exactly what those limits are) which may not be transcended, no matter how favorable the environment. One of the virtues of present-day schools, as contrasted with those of an earlier time, is that there is less emphasis on making everyone do the same thing at the same time and the same pace.

The extreme hereditarian makes just as great an error as the unyielding environmentalist. He may mouth the clichés, "You can't keep a good man down" and "Genius will out." There is no way of knowing how many good men have been kept down. It is conceivable that people whose

abilities blossom late in life are persons whose early environments were not conducive to the development of inherent talents. Certainly, there is evidence that not all those who have I.Q.'s high enough to indicate marked superiority actually achieve the competence that results in what we call genius. The schoolteacher who looks at the test score of a youngster, finds it low, and then asserts that he will be unable to teach him anything is leaning toward an extreme hereditarian view. The practical dangers of this extreme include implications for both the slow and the gifted. No hope is felt for the person with limited gifts. No particular stimulation need be provided for the gifted individual, since his success is thought to be inevitable.

A balanced view of this controversy by the teacher means that he will take every child where he is, with regard to his unknown hereditary make-up, and will do as much as he can for him. For the slow learner this would mean the exercise of patience in evaluating small amounts of progress; for the child with greater potential it would mean the provision of as much stimulation as possible in the form of extra study, additional projects, and a great variety of activities. It would mean, for either child, watching to see that symptoms of nervousness do not appear—nail biting, restlessness, and the like—as the result of what, for him, is too much stimulation. The balanced view calls for maintaining constant hope for development, no matter how little there is to work with.

Environment does shape the personality, but it is only a contributing factor. Other factors which must be considered result from the interaction between the organism with its environment; among them may be listed such components as metabolism, physical health and vigor, the will to succeed, and, of course, the mental capacity of the individual.

The Influence of Early Childhood. Many statements are made regarding the great importance of early childhood experiences. Typical of these is the following:

Childhood experiences and the memory of these experiences as the years go by leave an indelible impression on the individual's personality. The child whose childhood has been happy has an entirely different outlook on life from that of the child whose early years have been marked by constant friction, sadness, and emotional tension. Even though conditions improve in the child's environment as he grows older, the memories of those unhappy experiences will never be completely forgotten, nor will the effect on his personality ever be entirely eradicated.²

While the statement is accurate, the reader must be careful to pay attention to all parts of it; i.e., ". . . never be *completely* forgotten," and

² By permission from *Child Development*, 2d ed., by Elizabeth B. Hurlock. Copyright, 1950. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., pp. 581-582.

"nor . . . *entirely* eradicated." In short, the early childhood experiences do not finally and irrevocably shape the adult personality. General trends may be established. Bases are laid for later growth. But the personality, the individual, is growing in some direction during the entire life span.

Some psychologists and psychiatrists go so far as to announce that one of the major reasons for widespread neuroticism in our society is the anxiety of American mothers to train their babies in toilet habits. The proddings, promptings, and pressures to which the baby is subjected in the attempt to train him early are believed to bring about a state of tension that persists throughout life. Under the impact of this view, contemporary approaches to toilet training are changing. One reads much less frequently today than was possible ten years ago that training should be begun in the fourth month, the eighth month, or some such arbitrary figure. Today the advice is to wait until the child can talk a little and until there is some assurance that he can understand what is wanted. In short, the balanced view is that, since early influences do tend to persist, there is the necessity of understanding the nature of growth to the extent that "early influences" need not take the form of pressures at the first possible moment.

• The entire hope of education and the development of better mental health rest on the assumption that growth is continuous. That teachers do not ignore early childhood influences is revealed in their efforts to get information about prior experiences. This knowledge is used, however, by the wise teacher, as a step in formulating a program for the child which fits his needs.

Teachers Need Not Succeed with All Children. There is need for a balanced view as to how much can be accomplished with each child. It is possible, and probable, that even the best of teachers will fail with some children. Not all the factors that go to make up the thing called rapport between two individuals have as yet become known and been analyzed. Some teachers are particularly effective with some children and other teachers, just as effective over a period of time, are unable to get results with children who are easily handled by other teachers. It may be that a child readily finds in one teacher a duplicate of an adored parent, while another teacher is such an antithesis to his parents that rapport is difficult or impossible. The fault may be with the teacher himself. Perhaps subconsciously he sees in the child such a contrast to his ideal of what a child ought to be that it is difficult for him to give him a warm acceptance. Whatever the explanation might ultimately be, it is a fact that most teachers work more successfully with some children than with others. They should understand that this situation does not constitute a basis for feelings of failure.

A balanced view of the meaning of success in teaching, then, will accept as true that failure with some children is pardonable but that success with some is necessary. Of course, "the old college try" should be manifested in every case, new approaches should be devised, and new theories pondered and tested. There are other teachers, some of whom might succeed where you have failed. Perhaps, as a matter of actual fact, you paved the way for their success without your knowing it. There are influences outside the school which may bring about improvement where the school as a whole has been unable to effect visible results. When teachers evaluate their results, they must be objective—giving themselves credit where credit is due, blaming themselves when errors have been committed, and taking neither credit nor blame when the occasion warrants such an attitude.

Contemporary Beliefs May Be Found to Be Fallacious. We should like to believe that scientific knowledge has reached such a stage that we labor under no fallacious beliefs. However, it is certain that scholars of previous generations felt that their insights were such that chances for error were few. Many people think that views of mental hygiene, the nature of the learning process, theories of education, and methods of child rearing are subject to swings of the pendulum. Extreme errors, according to this view, are due to stressing too much whatever has replaced that which is repudiated. This may be true. It is likely, though, that contemporary beliefs are more than swings of the pendulum. Contemporary theories are, to a large extent, based on experimental evidence and data from controlled observation, rather than intuitive judgment or astute guesses. There is less likelihood than formerly that gross errors are being made. Nevertheless, it will be the part of wisdom to be ready to change beliefs.

When the past history of ideas in psychology is examined, evidence can be found to support the notion that tentativeness is necessary. The belief that formal discipline (improving the mind through strenuous mental exercise) should be discarded has been accepted by most psychologists. Yet there are, today, a few stalwarts who feel that we should not go too far with the contrasting notion of transfer of training; that is, there may still be virtue in carrying on mental activity which has no immediate practical result aside from the activity involved. John B. Watson's idea that a child should be let alone—not cuddled and spoiled—and thus learn to absorb his own difficulties was almost completely replaced by the idea that love, cuddling, and protection are vital parts of a favorable environment. Today one finds indications of reversion toward the Watsonian theory—that children should not be overprotected, that they need to encounter conflict in order to learn to meet difficulties.

It is difficult to say just what the contemporary idea of the significance of thumb sucking is. One can find firm adherents to almost any of the following beliefs: Thumb sucking should be firmly prohibited by slapping, using bitter-tasting applications, or splinting the thumb or the elbow. The habit should be approached in a positive manner; *i.e.*, many interesting toys or an all-round wholesome emotional environment should be supplied. The habit will result in deformity of the teeth and jaws and makes the child more liable to disease. It will not affect the growth of teeth and jaws, but the natural growth of the jaws will straighten out any difficulties as soon as the habit is abandoned. It is caused by the child's not exercising his sucking "instinct" sufficiently—his milk should come as the result of effort on his part. It is caused by the child's having to work too long at sucking and he associates satisfaction and comfort with sucking—his milk should come more easily. Steps should be taken to eliminate the habit, since the longer it is continued the harder it will be to break. Let the child alone; the natural growth process will result in abandonment of thumb sucking. Calling attention to it in any way will only intensify the habit. Forget about it. It doesn't really make any difference anyway. And with this we come to a mental hygiene principle, "Problems are frequently not so serious as the attitude that is taken toward them." Whatever the conclusion one draws, it seems patently clear that, using thumb sucking as an example, there is need for a balanced view. The example also indicates the distinct possibility that contemporary beliefs may be found to be fallacious.

There Is Danger in Too Much Concern about Mental Hygiene. Perhaps the biggest drawback to the study of mental hygiene is the tendency of students to see in themselves the symptoms which are discussed. Teachers studying the subject may be overimpressed with the significance of the subject and, as a result, think they find in their pupils overwhelming evidence of maladjustment. There is a danger in too much introspection; there is danger of hasty analysis which proceeds on the basis of insufficient background study. It is sometimes said that psychology attracts a queer lot of students—those who are too much absorbed in seeking the sources of their own traits. Without endorsing this belief, a reasonable thinker may trust that the continued and objective study of psychology will very probably result in improvement of behavior. But the element of objectivity is essential. And the study of mental hygiene must be approached with a firm intention that no one idea shall be emphasized to the exclusion of related factors and contrasting ideas.

One of the explanations for the present high incidence of mental disorder in our society is that people have too much time for introspection. Because of the many labor-saving devices available, the reduction in the average length of the working day, and the greater popularity of vaca-

tions, people have more time for self-study than was previously at their command. This situation is reflected in the following statement: "What of the American housewife? Blessed with labor-saving devices in quantities envied by her sisters abroad, she suffers least from overwork. Yet, commented the U.S. report, 'neurosis is common in the housewife,' though not necessarily any more so than the rest of the population. And despite all her gadgets, she often complains of fatigue."³

Robert Coughlan emphasizes the prevalence of too great concern when he says that, as medical science has reduced the probability of child mortality, parents have become less absorbed with keeping their children alive and have worried about mental health. "The final result might be thought of, in the language of the times, as a 'neuroses-neurosis'; that is, a neurosis brought on by excessive fear of neuroses."⁴

Should we, on the basis of such observations, stop thinking about the problem of mental health and let life and growth take its course with no attempt at guidance? Obviously a "Yes" answer to this question would be undesirable. There remains the very clear implication that attention should be directed to the positive aspects of mental hygiene. There should be an evaluation of assets, an emphasis on constructive living, as well as an attempt to eliminate negative traits and avoid harmful habits. A balanced viewpoint cannot require the suppression, the sublimation, of thoughts about mental health.

UNPROVED BELIEFS

It would be the part of *absolute* honesty to say that none of our beliefs in the realm of psychology have been proved, in the sense that there are incontestable answers or that all the data are known. Individual students and various writers will have their own separate beliefs that deserve particular attention, by virtue of being unproved. In this section a number of beliefs will be discussed in an attempt to show why precaution is needed. There is no intention, however, of creating the impression that the beliefs mentioned are more questionable than others that might be named.

There Is a Norm for Conduct. In books on psychology and education normal behavior is often mentioned. Actually there is no precise, or even approximate, definition of what is normal. There are "normal" height-weight tables, but careful scholars warn that there is no established norm for individuals. Each person must be regarded, not in terms of averages, but in terms of body structure and bone formation. A child deviating 10

³ "Queen with Flat Feet," *Pathfinder*, Vol. 57 (Oct. 4, 1950), p. 30. By permission of the publisher.

⁴ Coughlan, *op. cit.*, p. 114. By permission of the publisher.

pounds from the table may, in terms of his bodily organization, be quite normal. Normal intelligence is spoken of but, even when it is judged within limits—as 85 to 115 or 90 to 100 I.Q.—there is realization that other factors, such as drive, sociality, and experience, condition the “normality” of the resultant behavior. The reasons for difficulty in establishing norms for conduct are easily seen. Individual differences in the possession of specific traits are extensive. The combinations of traits within an individual vary greatly. The expectations of individuals observing the behaviors concerned are widely different. Community and cultural demands vary from place to place and from time to time.

Normality of behavior, from the mental hygiene viewpoint, is similarly perplexing. In fact, “. . . any behavior may become a problem if it is regarded and treated as such by the adult to whose care and training the child happens to be entrusted.”⁵ Thus, whispering may be a symptom or a problem to some teachers, although to others it is a normal manifestation of interest in class activities. Thumb sucking, it has been seen, is regarded by some as a bad habit or symptom of difficulty, while others regard it as a normal phase of growing. Masturbation is a shocking behavior to some observers; to others, including some psychiatrists, a passing stage of development. Lying, in children, must be immediately corrected, according to some views; but another view regards it as evidence of normal immaturity. Such contrasts reveal the perplexity involved in defining normality.

The student of mental hygiene must be careful to note that normality of behavior is emphatically not a matter of a kind of behavior. Bed-wetting is “normal” for children below the age of two—the age of the child is a factor. Lying is “normal” for a four-year-old—he lacks the discrimination of maturity. Lying may be normal for an adult—the social setting must be considered. “Normality” becomes a matter of time, place, and person involved. Next comes the question of “How much?” Some lying, stealing, bullying, procrastination, daydreaming, rationalization, and projection may be viewed with equanimity; but too frequent a manifestation of these behaviors may be a matter of concern.

These observations should not be interpreted as indicating that there is no workable concept of the meaning of normality. They point out only that precision is lacking and tentativeness in judgment is consequently required. Practical implications of the import of these considerations should include the following: (1) One cannot generalize as to the importance of a given type of behavior without some regard for the meaning of that behavior for the individual concerned. (2) A given be-

⁵ E. K. Wickman, *Children's Behavior and Teachers' Attitudes*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1929, p. 50. By permission of the publisher.

havior has little significance in isolation. Various traits take on meaning as they are seen in relation to other traits; not one symptom but a number of symptoms in combination is the crucial consideration. (3) The present situation of the individual and his developmental background must be considered when behavior is being evaluated.

Type of Body Does Not Influence Personality. The notion that fat men are jolly and that lean men are treacherous has been thrust aside as an outdated superstition. Kretchmer's theory of morphological types is in disrepute among contemporary psychologists. We may agree with these conclusions, since they conflict with data proving the continuity of differences; that is, there is not a trimodal or bimodal distribution of body types. Rather, extreme types are merely the borders of huge numbers of "averages" (see Fig. 7). Yet the idea that body type does influence

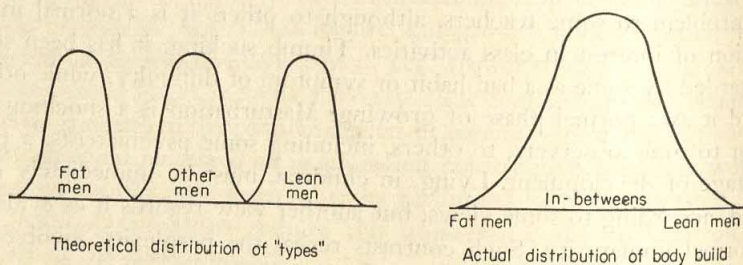


Fig. 7. Distribution of types of body build.

personality keeps coming into notice again. W. H. Sheldon⁶ holds to the theory that bodily physique is normally characterized by a certain type of personality. The error of discrete types is avoided by providing for continuity of measurement. Three major types are listed: endomorph—abdominal predominance (fat men); mesomorph—predominance of bone and muscle (athletic type); and ectomorph—long, delicate bones with large surface in proportion to mass (lean type). Measurement of an individual is recorded on a scale having 7 for the extreme and 1 for the minimum. Thus a predominantly endomorph would be a 7-1-1. A mesomorph would be a 1-7-1, and an extreme ectomorph would be recorded 1-1-7. The sum does not always add up to 9, and an average individual representing an extreme in no body type would be a 3-4-3 or 4-3-4. Other variations might be 2-3-5, 1-2-6, and the like. Thus is continuity provided for and the notion of discrete types is avoided. It is not necessary for personality organization to follow a discrete type with such a basis. One does not naturally need to be a jovial fellow, a glutton, an aggressive

⁶ W. H. Sheldon and S. S. Stevens, *The Varieties of Temperament*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942.

athlete, or a lonely scholar; he may, without deviating from his body type, be a combination of these qualities.

When two brothers are observed to have distinctly different personalities, we immediately say that of course their heredity is different. Then too, their environments, while superficially the same, are different because one of the boys is older. But according to Sheldon's theory, it is possible to suppose that their body types, being different, predispose them to divergent personality organizations. We have seen scholars who are endomorphs and scholars who are ectomorphs. There are salesmen who are fat and salesmen who are thin. This would seem to indicate that interests are not greatly influenced by morphological type. But there are unanswered questions. Is it not possible that the endomorph gains his scholarly inclination at the cost of emotional stress and strain? Is it not possible that the lean salesman has to force himself to be pleasant and friendly? Does not the extremely lean man find that, in spite of ability, he does not enjoy the athletic competitions which are so highly satisfactory to the mesomorph?

Even though no unequivocal answers are given to these questions, some interesting speculations for the classroom teacher derive from them. Let it be assumed, for the time being, that the bodily type does predispose an individual toward a particular kind of personality development and, that, because of body types, some interests are more natural than others and certain activities are more gratifying than others. Without this assumption, we know that some youngsters enjoy social dancing, others are thrilled by athletic pursuits, some require no urging to produce artistic creations, and many need no prodding to devote themselves heartily to their books. Yet, in our attempt to see that each child is *adjusted*, we urge him to select a partner and get into the swing of things; we give sales talks about the development of the mind and body, to get him to join the athletic activities; we impress upon him that all children should cooperate in the making of the room mural; and we tell him, "You can learn to enjoy your lessons if you work hard enough to gain a little success." It is not a question of repudiating the ideal of "well-rounded development." The argument is that too much prodding may impose greater personality stress than would come about through the child's remaining a wallflower, a side-lines observer, or a mediocre scholar. It would seem reasonable to believe tentatively that bodily organization may be one of the important factors in explaining differences in personality, and that undue forcing may work more harm than allowing the child to do what seems to come most naturally. Body type and its relation to personality may yet be proved to be more than a foolish fancy.

Discipline Warps the Personality. The meaning of constructive discipline is dealt with more fully in the chapter on The Mental Hygiene

of Discipline. The purpose of the discussion, at this point, is merely to question the belief that discipline warps the personality. There is no quarrel with the view that discipline should be positive, that it finally should come from within the individual, and that imposed discipline should be held to a minimum. The point raised is that some discipline of the harsher type, the imposed kind, may at times be entirely appropriate and constructive. Certainly, both experimental and observational data are available indicating that what must be considered is not just discipline, as such, but its appropriateness, its consistency, and its timeliness. There are many well-adjusted, happy, and now self-disciplined adults who have been subjected to stern, appropriate, and consistent discipline. The matter is mentioned here merely to show that there is need for a balanced viewpoint and that beliefs so far unproved may yet be proved to have a degree of validity.

As a matter of fact, if imposed discipline has not been unduly harsh, inconsistent, and incomprehensible, it is actually appreciated—at least, in retrospect. Most of us adults are products of the era of firm discipline and we do not resent it. Real adjustive values accrue from adhering to social requirements. Apropos of this view is the counsel of Henry C. Link:

The first and continuous problem for every parent is to teach his children to do the things they should do, whether they like them or not, and to avoid doing the things they should not do. If, from our psychological counseling of hundreds of parents and their children, we were to pick the most common cause of mental and emotional instability, sense of failure and inferiority, it would be the practice of letting children act according to their likes and dislikes instead of according to principles. By not doing what they disliked they had failed to acquire the habits and abilities which produce competence and self-reliance.

On the other hand, the secure child is the child who comes to know what his parents stand for, and that they cannot be shaken from their standards by his arguing or wheedling. This is the kind of authority that children learn to respect, because it is the authority not of force or of age but of impersonal principles. Where the parents are sure of their principles, the child will be sure of his parents.⁷

As is true of so many problems in mental hygiene, the question is one of balance. There must be both yielding to external authority and a chance to explore and discover as one exercises his capacity for independence. Just as the parent must not rob the child of opportunities to learn the invaluable lesson of conformance, so the teacher must see to

⁷ Henry C. Link, "How to Give Your Child Security," *Reader's Digest*, Vol. 58 (March, 1951), p. 40. Adapted from Henry C. Link, *The Way to Security*, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1951. By permission of Doubleday & Company, Inc.

it that in his attempt to make school life enjoyable he does not remove the obstacles that stimulate development. Let there be concessions when the point at issue is minor. Let both parents and teachers stand firm when a significant principle is at stake. This will require mature adults; but only mature adults can exercise the constructive discipline that leads to progressive maturity for the child.

There Is a Correct Way to Rear a Child. When one reads in books on child rearing and child psychology that a wise parent must do this and that and must not do something else, it begins to appear that certain authorities feel there is a specific way to raise children. The fact of the matter is that some parents whom we would judge to be far from ideal have children who are more healthy mentally than others who have been raised by the book. Thus, in spite of notable swings in the popularity of certain theories, healthy adults have come from homes dominated by sharply contrasting practices. This should give parents confidence to believe that the errors they may have made are not necessarily irrevocable. It should give teachers a feeling of confidence that children can be helped, in spite of negative home backgrounds. Dr. Benjamin Spock says:

Don't take too seriously all that the neighbors say. Don't be overawed by what the experts say. Don't be afraid to trust your own common sense. Bringing up your child won't be a complicated job if you take it easy, trust your own instincts, and follow the directions that your doctor gives you. . . .

It may surprise you to hear that the more people have studied different methods of bringing up children the more they have come to the conclusion that what good mothers and fathers instinctively feel like doing for their babies is usually best after all. Furthermore, all parents do their best job when they have a natural, easy confidence in themselves. Better to make a few mistakes from being natural than to do everything letter-perfect out of a feeling of worry.⁸

While the writer professes no feelings whatever of confidence in the reliability of human "instincts," he does endorse the argument that there are many ways of rearing healthy and happy children. Whatever techniques are accepted, if they are backed by good intentions, a wholesome acceptance of children, and *consistency* of application, the results are likely to be gratifying.

The element of consistency, in this triad, is no mean contender for first place. Children must know, and be able to depend on, what is expected and what is required of them. Children taken from poor homes

⁸ Benjamin Spock, *The Pocket Book of Baby and Child Care*, New York: Pocket Books, Inc., 1946, pp. 3 and 4. By permission of the publisher.

and placed in good ones—studies show—still long for the thing to which they have been accustomed. Children who were removed from their homes to the quiet of the countryside, during the bombing of London, showed more personality disorders than did those who remained in the midst of the noise, excitement, and fear of warfare. Youngsters who are old enough to express their feelings in words object to moving from one community to another; and among the contributing factors to personality disorders a leading one is “frequent change of residence.” It must be concluded, from these evidences, that the actual conditions in which a child grows are no more important than the basic psychological factors which lie back of them. There is not a unique correct way to rear children.

There Is a Correct Way to Teach. There has been considerable controversy in recent years regarding the relative merits of progressive teaching and traditional teaching—as though there were two ways to teach, one of them better than the other. As a matter of actual analysis, there are times when it is difficult to see that so-called “traditional teaching” is any different from “progressive teaching.” A study was conducted from 1933 to 1941 by the Progressive Education Association with thirty schools, to determine the effectiveness of progressive education. The interesting outcome was that superior accomplishments through progressive education were matched, in other areas, by the accomplishments of “control” students from traditional schools. But it is also worthy of note that some of the progressive schools made few significant changes in their procedures, while others made quite radical changes—both acting under the name of progressivism. As in the matter of child rearing, the conclusion seems warranted that the spirit back of the method is as significant as the method itself.

The following appeared in a set of principles governing a sound teacher education program: “In the teacher education program, the methods and techniques of the professional staff should exemplify the type of modern teaching considered most desirable for the level and purpose for which the instruction is given.” Can there be such a thing as “the type”? An instructor, in order to provide such an exemplification, would have to be a veritable chameleon. Just as there are many kinds of personalities which are effective in the classroom, so too are there many types of teaching which are effective.

Many carefully controlled experiments on teaching methods have been made. Results are published in professional books and magazines. One cannot but be impressed with the success of these experiments. At times it may seem that at last the answer to successful teaching has been discovered. It appears that our own techniques should immediately be modified. But there is reason to pause, because of one factor that is ex-

ceedingly difficult to control or to measure—the enthusiasm of the teacher. The experimenter, in his enthusiasm for the new, kindles eagerness in the students. This is a factor to be considered in connection with all successful teaching procedures.

One comforting assurance a teacher can always have is that he need not imitate the successful practices of anyone else. It is always possible that, in terms of his particular personality, the methods he has developed are best for him. This assurance, however, carries with it a liability. A technique that is successful with one child may not work so well with another. It may, therefore, be necessary to deviate from habitual and previously successful practices, in order to be of maximum help to a child who is different from those met earlier. The classroom teacher can profitably pay attention to practices which others find workable, so that his own ways will be modified to solve immediate circumstances. The classroom teacher should not seek for the best method but for a continuous modification of practices that will challenge different students and serve to maintain his own enthusiasm for his work.

THINGS WE DO NOT KNOW

How Learning Takes Place. Learning is operationally defined as “the modification of behavior through experience.” But no universally accepted explanation of the nature of these modifications has been made. Some explain learning on the basis of synaptic changes, others view learning as an organismic change, without specifically designating the nature of the modifications. No doubt, scientific proof of the nature of these changes would be of value to educators. In the meantime, it is necessary to act on what we think the nature of learning to be. Actually, we do not operate in a vacuum, in spite of not knowing what learning is, because *we do know a great deal about the conditions under which learning takes place.* The practical result of additional knowledge about how learning takes place will only be in the form of still further improving the conditions of learning.

Even without describing *how* learning takes place, it is safe to say that the conditions under which the most rapid modification of behavior takes place would include, to a degree, the following: (1) Motivation on the part of the individual—action begins with the organism. Learners must give attention to *the* stimulus which must be selected from among all the stimuli that might possibly be given attention at one time. (2) A personal goal must be attached to the motivation process. The learner must (if learning is to be most economical) have a clear perception of the goal and must accept it for himself. (3) The acceptance of the goal means that tensions are generated within the individual. These tensions cannot be released because of lack of knowledge. (4) The learner casts about for

a way of resolving the tension. He must select from all possible alternatives one that he tries—one which seems to be an answer to his problem. If this does not work, he attempts another alternative—having learned some which will not work, he can try others which may take him closer to his goal. (5) Successful responses are fixed through association with the familiar, through appropriate drill, and through satisfactions derived from successful attack of the problem. It is further known that speed of learning is dependent upon the intelligence of the individual, his relative maturity, his past experiences affording him an associational background, the difficulty of the problem in terms of the foregoing, and the strength of the motivation.

When the ramifications of these conditions of learning are reflected upon, it is clear that the teacher can have plenty of reliable knowledge to work with, despite an incomplete explanation of how the learning process operates.

A Desirable Combination of Environmental Influences. Lest those who are responsible for the growth of children become discouraged, there is significance in admitting that we do not know just what combination of environmental influences will produce the best adjustment in individuals. When books, such as this, undertake to describe the optimum influences for pupil development, one might become dejected upon realizing that the best conditions have not been supplied. Actually, there is no sharp line between what is good and what is poor. There is, however, a distinguishable difference between what is best and what is worst. It is this latter with which we are mainly concerned in trying to establish better conditions for mental health.

Life is easier for some than it is for others. Two persons (theoretically) might live in the same environment, yet grow into different personalities and enjoy different degrees of mental health. If these two started with the same inherent potentialities, we are forced to believe that it is the combination of environmental factors that produced the difference. Perhaps some kind word, an evidence of love or confidence, a helpful act, in the midst of a whole assortment of negative influences, was sufficient to pull one of the persons through to better adjustment. Thus it is that some children who seem to lack love, who have no basis for security, and who possess few material advantages, nevertheless develop into healthy, confident individuals. Some unknown factor, amid the total collection of known negative factors, throws out a life line to the drowning man. On the other hand, a person who appears to have all the advantages manifests multiple symptoms of mental ill-health. Some seemingly isolated factor in his environment was evidently "the straw that broke the camel's back."

The Meaning of Abnormality. Teachers studying mental hygiene invariably ask the question, "How do I know when I have an abnormal child

in my class?" The answer is not easy. It varies with the individual, the situation, and the frequency of the manifested symptoms. It is possible to answer the question only for those individuals who differ widely from the "norm"; as the borderline cases are studied, the answer becomes increasingly difficult. In short, it is easier to distinguish a psychotic individual from a normal one—because he has lost his hold on reality—than it is to distinguish a neurotic from the normal—because he is trying to meet his problem, but in an unworkable manner. The difficulty has been treated above in the section on Unproved Beliefs—There Is a Norm for Conduct. It was shown that normality is a matter of time, place, and the person involved. Similar problems are involved in describing abnormality.

Abnormality, then, cannot be described in terms of absolutes. It is not simply a matter of *how far* one may differ from others in such characteristics as aggressiveness, sociability, and self-confidence before he is judged to be abnormal, but is also a matter of who, when, and where. An example may serve to clarify the problem. Is a child who daydreams abnormal? The answer may be "Yes" if the following conditions prevail: The child has a degree of physical health and strength that would make action easy for him; he engages in reverie when other children are finding satisfaction in vigorous action; he is "lost in his world" when stimulating circumstances surround him. In short, he is abnormal because he has lost his hold on the world of reality. Daydreaming, however, would not be considered abnormal under the following conditions: If the child were crippled and thus had inactivity forced upon him; if inactivity were imposed as punishment or by adults who did not appreciate his need for activity; and if the stimuli which surrounded him had little significance in terms of his background. Abnormality in the classroom, then, is something which is as yet not known with preciseness, but something which is highly relative.

NOT ALL OBSTACLES NEED TO BE REMOVED

One of the newer points of emphasis in child-guidance clinics is that children need to grow in their ability to absorb tensions and to overcome obstacles. Teachers often ask the pertinent question, "Should we attempt to remove all obstacles from the child's path?" The answer, of course, is "No," and again a word concerning precaution in the approach to mental hygiene becomes relevant.

Obstacles and Conflict Have a Stimulation Value. It is perfectly possible for children and adolescents to be overprotected. Psychologists, psychiatrists, and teachers have all encountered individuals who are faced with problems of present and future adjustment precisely because they have never been allowed to meet difficulties, to get into trouble, or to experi-

ence disappointment. Such persons have become so dependent that they are immediately lost when the protecting guardian is not at hand.

There is the home in which one or both parents are too affectionate, too demonstrative, too willing to gratify every whim of the child, and too anxious to keep the child dependent upon the parent. . . . A mother under such circumstance may be a veritable vampire who sucks the life blood out of her child. The child may not be given an opportunity to compete with other children, to undergo any reasonable hardships, or to develop independence of thought or action.⁹

Experienced teachers can recall occasions when they have made assignments which they had thought were too difficult, only to have the students respond by doing the work very satisfactorily. It seemed that placing additional obstacles in their way resulted in their getting down to work seriously and producing more than was expected. In our own lives, we have often been challenged to do something that was more than ordinarily difficult because we were told that it was more than we could do. Ordinarily, a game of tennis or of bridge is more highly enjoyed, even in defeat, when the competitor is a worthy one than would be the case if played victoriously over an opponent who presented no obstacle.

Barriers to progress and obstacles in the way of satisfaction call for the growth of the individual. They demand that one gather his resources for attack. They require that one develop skills and acquire information that will facilitate achievement. It has been said that among the criteria of psychological maturity must be included the ability to endure hardships and an attitude that looks on problems as a challenge to personal growth. These aspects of maturity are not free gifts of nature. They are achieved as the result of work and struggles. It follows that care must be taken to allow growing children and youth freedom in their struggle against some of the obstacles that confront them.

The problem for the mental hygienist cannot be answered in terms of black or white. It becomes a matter of determining, as far as possible, which obstacles have healthy stimulation value and which are likely to cause tensions that will end in frustration. Obstacles so large as to leave little reasonable chance that the pupil will be able to attack them successfully should be removed. Obstacles appropriate to the pupil's level of maturity should be allowed to serve as sources of stimulation. Specifically, if the child has reached the mental age of six and a half years and has other indications of being able to learn to read then, in spite of the fact that he might find it somewhat difficult, appropriate pressure might well

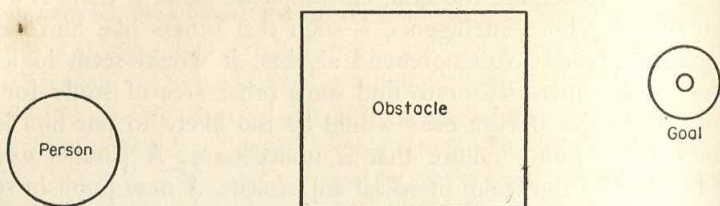
⁹ Reprinted by permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc., from *Child Psychology for Professional Workers*, by Florence M. Teagarden, copyright 1940, 1946, by Prentice-Hall, Inc., p. 226.

be put on him to acquire the skill. On the other hand, if there is a pupil in high school whose intelligence is such that others like him have in large measure failed to comprehend algebra, it would seem logical to wait for further maturity or to find some other area of study for him. Placing him in the algebra class would be too likely to put him into a position of frustrating failure that is unnecessary. A parallel example might be cited in the realm of social adjustment. A new pupil in school has so many adjustments to make that it would be desirable to call on other pupils to be friendly and courteous to him, so that his adjustment would be made easier. Conversely, a pupil who had long been in the class and who had made many of his adjustments might well be left alone in a struggle to get along harmoniously in a class discussion of student government. These situations are schematically represented in Fig. 8.

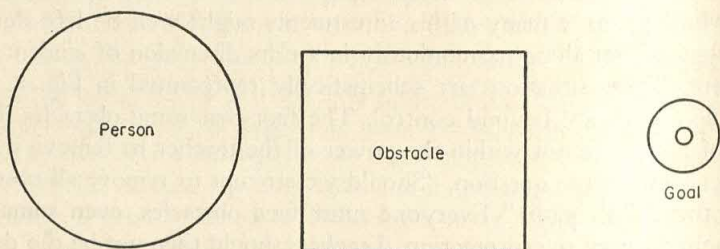
Some factors are beyond control. The fact that some obstacles in the way of pupils are not within the power of the teacher to remove throws further light on the question, "Should we attempt to remove all obstacles from the child's path?" Everyone must face obstacles, even some that are in the form of overprotection. Teachers should then not be too deeply concerned about removing *some* obstacles that will make growth somewhat easier. In spite of the fact that as much as possible is done to remove obstacles that have little or no stimulation values, tensions and frustrations will remain. The removal of the more troublesome obstacles will make it possible for the individual to face the inevitabilities with greater equanimity.

Suppose that as much as seems desirable has been done to make learning pleasant—clear explanation of purposes, help when needed, encouragement, appropriate tasks—the pupil may still have to live with the fact that his parents are anticipating divorce. The help he receives in school toward accomplishment, recognition, and gaining feelings of security will increase the probability that he will be able to absorb the conflicts generated by the home situation. A pupil laboring under the handicap of financial poverty—poor clothes and inadequate diet—should not suffer from the additional burden of being required to master chemistry and Latin lessons which are beyond his intellectual level. Children suffering physical handicaps—heart dysfunctions, crippling, low vitality—should have their burdens lightened by being aided in finding activities to substitute for athletic prestige.

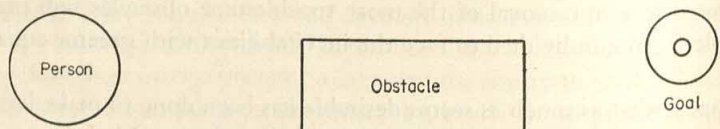
Of course it is necessary to guard against assuming too soon that things are beyond control. It is possible that an understanding and audacious teacher might help incompatible parents see how important it is, for the welfare of the child they love, for them to settle their differences. It may be that the teacher could work toward marshalling community resources that would help children overcome their poverty. Allowing time for ad-



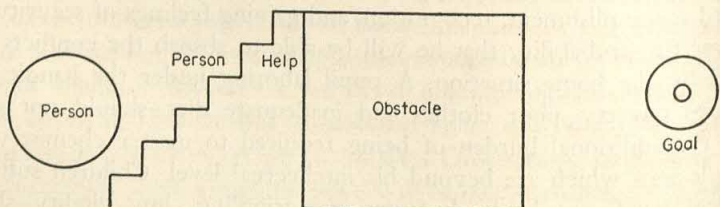
Problem: An immature individual faced by an overwhelming obstacle. Result—tensions leading to frustration and personality disintegration.



Solution 1: Help the individual to grow by providing preparatory experiences or merely by temporarily setting aside the obstacles until further maturation has taken place.



Solution 2: Reduce the size of the obstacle so that it is appropriate to the present level of maturity of the individual.



Solution 3: Give the individual help (suggestions, physical assistance, understanding) that will enable him to climb over the present barrier. Provide a progressive sequence of steps to be taken.

Fig. 8. Schematic representation of techniques for dealing with obstacles.

ditional mental maturity to be achieved may solve some academic questions.¹⁰ There is hope that medical treatment may serve to reduce the liabilities imposed by physical handicaps. But the fact remains that now, today, these are likely to be insurmountable handicaps. Teachers need not be concerned about removing too many of them. In spite of the best of efforts, some handicaps will remain, and the pupils will not be deprived of opportunities for growth.

Everybody has mental conflict of some kind and in some degree. This is likely to cause incipient fear, confusion, anxiety, and a feeling of uncertainty. It, however, some one may say, is the inevitable condition of mental growth and development. True enough, mental conflict does give opportunity for development. If it is solved by sleep, it does little harm. If it is solved by an objective attitude, it is well. That is a condition of growth and involves practice in a healthful attitude. If it is solved by integration at a higher level, that means growth and development of the wholesome personality.¹¹

Classroom Conditions Need Not Be Perfect. It is worth mentioning that classroom conditions and teaching methods need not be perfect. Effective teachers, from time to time, have grave doubts as to their value because they are so far from perfection. This is an unfortunate situation, especially if the opposite extreme attitude is adopted—that it makes no difference what goes on in the classroom, because pupils will survive all their experiences. It is important to reach a balance between these extremes.

Certainly there are many adults, among them the readers of this book, who have triumphantly survived many negative experiences in school. They have been exposed to dogmatically exacting teachers, to teachers who took no pride in their work; they have been given meaningless tasks to perform; and they have had to work with limited materials. No doubt, these negative factors stimulated growth. But, there were also those who were frustrated by these experiences, and for them school became so distasteful that they stopped going at the earliest possible moment. Perhaps the reason why the average school achievement in the United States remains around 8.5 grades can be found in the fact that too many pupils have been faced by too many frustrating obstacles.

Negative influences in the classroom should be seriously studied with a view to eliminating or reducing them. There is no need for courting disease by intentional exposure. On the other hand, it is vital that there should be enough difficulty in school tasks to call for the expenditure of some

¹⁰ Research reveals that many failures in algebra could be avoided if it were taught in the junior year instead of the freshman year.

¹¹ William H. Burnham, *The Wholesome Personality*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1932, p. 358. By permission of the publisher.

energy. Fortunately, there are discernible clues to help teachers determine what is too much and what is too little in the way of requirements and motivation. When children begin to show symptoms of nervousness in the form of irritability, inattention, emotional outbursts, sullen resignation, or chronic disobedience, it may be well to become critical of existing methods and demands. When children appear bored, spend their time in annoying others, and develop dilatory work habits and excessive day-dreaming, it is time to wonder whether the tasks are appropriate to the capacity of the individuals concerned. The need for balance is patent. Perspective must be arrived at through continued study and the evaluation of past success and failures.

Child psychologists point out that the chronically happy, tolerant, and satisfied parent is a sickly sweet example for the child. A parent who becomes disgruntled and cross over a child's actions—though he does not reject the child—is establishing a more normal condition for development. He is providing the child with an experience that he is bound to meet in later life. He is, in short, safeguarding him with an inoculation for healthy normal living. Similarly, in the classroom there need not be a pallid tolerance for all kinds of behavior. Pupils have to learn that conformity to behavior requirements is a requisite part of effective social functioning. Normal beings are not uniformly and incessantly cheerful and tolerant. A teacher need not be a paragon.

SUMMARY

The need for balance and for perspective has been emphasized throughout this book. Extreme beliefs and theories are as likely to occur in the field of mental hygiene as in any other area of endeavor. Workers in mental hygiene must appreciate the fact that normality (whatever one's concept) is the usual thing. Most school pupils and most adults are normal. Dealing with deviates must not obscure this fact.

Theories change. Some change because they are erroneous, others because they have been overemphasized. Extremes of interpretation must be avoided. Several examples have been cited. Heredity must be given its due share of credit. Environment is important, but it is not the sole determinant of behavior. A balance between the two views is most probable when individual cases, rather than absolute influences, are considered. Early influences are significant, but one must not be so deeply impressed by their importance that early influences become pressures or that hope is abandoned for the prospects of future development. Teachers should not expect to be uniformly successful with every child's problem they attack. They should expect that an occasional failure will be balanced by their successes. New theories can be given respectful consideration, but care should be exercised to avoid overemphasis. Many theories, which

were once new, have been discarded. Some of our cherished beliefs of today may later be found to be defective. Perhaps most of all in the sane study of mental hygiene balance is needed. There must be a balance between excessive self-concern, too much introspection, and the view that one ought to "just let things happen." The mid-ground lies in objective study and experimentation.

There are many as yet unproved beliefs which must be critically evaluated. We do not know what normality is. Although the concept is vague now, it is becoming more useful as accompanying circumstances are used for interpretation in place of an absolute standard for normality's being accepted. There are people today who believe in some type of morphology, in spite of the fact that some morphological theories have been severely criticized. Morphology appears to be an unfounded belief that refuses to die. Similarly, the idea that repressive discipline is beneficial is moribund, but not deceased. Experience and experiment may yet prove that there is a place in constructive child development for external discipline. The many theories of child development that have been and are still accepted indicate that there is no one best way to rear children. In a similar vein, the wide variations of personalities and methods among successful teachers testify that there is no one ideal "teacher personality" and no single successful method of teaching. It appears, however, that adaptability and enthusiasm in both teachers and parents are most desirable factors.

There are some things which we do not know about teaching and about mental health. For instance, we do not know how learning takes place. Fortunately, we do know a great deal about the conditions under which learning takes place with relatively greater efficiency. We do not know what constitutes the ideal environment for healthy child development. We do know that environment must be interpreted in terms of human factors as well as physical factors and that the needs of individuals differ—by virtue of either innate or acquired characteristics.

Among the factors that should be mentioned by way of precaution in the field of mental hygiene is the assumption that it is not well to remove all obstacles to development from the pupil's experience. While learning should be enjoyable, this does not imply that difficulties should be eliminated entirely. Actually, difficulties surmounted make for enjoyment. Some things are beyond the control of either teacher or pupil. Teachers can help pupils prepare for these by providing a kind of immunization against difficulties, by seeing to it that difficulties are equitably distributed among all pupils. All of which is to say that good mental health is possible—perhaps even stimulated to a degree—in classrooms where conditions are not perfect and in situations in which the teacher

himself is somewhat short of perfection. Human fallibility is not so much a liability as it is a challenge to development.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Why do you think that with two sets of parents who use entirely different techniques in dealing with their children both seem to achieve a degree of success?
2. Can you recall any instances in which the force of circumstance has seemed to "keep a good man down"?
3. Cite an instance, from your own experience and contacts, in which negative early influences have been overcome.
4. What precautions are necessary for applying the idea that teachers need not succeed with all children?
5. Make a survey among your friends or classmates to see what the consensus is regarding thumb sucking.
6. Do you think it possible that some people would be handicapped by the study of mental hygiene? Give reasons for your answer.
7. Write an account of your concept of a normal personality. Present it to your classmates or your instructor for evaluation and suggestions. Is there similarity or disparity between your concept and that of others?
8. What evaluation would you place on Sheldon's view of morphological types?
9. Cite some instances in which obstacles and conflicts seem to have had a beneficial effect upon a child's development.
10. What are some factors in a child's life that seem to be largely beyond control by the teacher? Can anything be done to ameliorate the situation?
11. Have you had, at any time in your school career, a "good" teacher who displayed questionable personality traits?
12. What limitations, considering those listed in the chapter, as well as in your own experience, do you think are the most serious handicaps to mental health?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

GARRISON, KARL C., *The Psychology of Exceptional Children*, rev. ed., New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1950, pp. 468-484.

This chapter summarizes the need for and nature of mental hygiene. A number of situations are mentioned that must be remedied or improved before the "potential citizens of tomorrow" can realize their promise. The material will serve to refresh the reader's view of pertinent mental hygiene problems.

GRIFFIN, J. D. M., S. R. LAYCOCK, and W. LINE, *Mental Hygiene*, New York: American Book Company, 1940, pp. 1-7 and 276-291.

The first chapter indicates the extent and pervasiveness of the mental hygiene emphasis, with special reference to classroom implications. The other chapter indicates what needs to be done to lessen the handicaps to mental health, in view of our social and economic milieu.

RYAN, W. CARSON, *Mental Health through Education*, New York: The Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1938, pp. 49-69.

The author, in this chapter, "School Handicaps to Mental Health," considers the limitations to mental hygiene in a manner different from that presented in this volume. Established school practices, such as grades, promotion, recitations, homework, examinations, and discipline, need to be revised to cultivate better mental health.

THORPE, LOUIS P., *Child Psychology and Development*, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1946. 766 pp.

Starting with a review of outmoded theories of child development, the author describes promising practices that stem from an analysis of children's needs. Some common mistakes of parents and teachers are mentioned and a constructive program for mental health is outlined.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Act Your Age, Coronet Films, Inc., 65 East South Water, Chicago 1, Ill. (18 min, BW & C, sd.)

An appeal to high-school-age youngsters to progress from childish behavior patterns to more mature reactions. Flashbacks to earlier responses reveal similarities and contrasts of mature and immature actions.

Family Circles, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42d Street, New York 36. (31 min, BW, sd.)

Shows how the interplay of school and home influences affects the development of today's youngsters. Experiences of three children illustrate vividly how parental indifference, lack of imagination, and emotional conflict at home can destroy the confidence and enthusiasm for a child's success at school.

Preface to a Life, Castle Films, 1445 Park Ave., New York 29. (28 min, BW, sd.)

The story of Michael Thompson and the four different ways he might turn out, depending on the way his parents treat him in his earliest years. Shows the role of environment in shaping hereditary potential.

Search for Happiness, McGraw-Hill. (17 min, BW, sd.)

The complications of daily living create adjustment problems. Aid is sought to facilitate the adjustment. Often aid is of questionable value; *i.e.*, pills, potions, astrology, numerology, etc. Indicates the need for sound and comprehensive approaches to mental health.

PART FOUR

THE TEACHER'S MENTAL HEALTH

I7

A POSITIVE VIEW OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION

OUR PROBLEMS are often not so serious as the attitude which we take toward them. This principle of mental hygiene has many applications and implications; but for the teacher the statement is most pertinent of all when it is brought to bear on the evaluation of education as a profession. You see around you many who are happy, confident, and satisfied (though not complacent), as they perform their work as teachers. Others, surrounded by the same demands, working conditions, problems, and requirements, chronically fret about their restrictions and obligations. There is no doubt that a part of each of these two contrasting views is dependent upon the individual teacher.

The author firmly believes that it is important for teachers to take as optimistic a view of their profession as is possible. This is important not only because the mental health of the teacher as an individual depends upon it, but even more because the view taken will be reflected in the effectiveness of the work done. This chapter is written with the specific objective of attempting to influence teachers to see all the good they possibly can in their profession. Admittedly, there are drawbacks, handicaps, and justifiable criticisms. Some of these are presented as challenges to improve the situation. There are also some unequivocal advantages. These are presented to stimulate teachers to appreciate more fully the many values which may accrue from teaching. If the reader detects an undue bias in the presentation, he should remember that there are sound mental hygiene reasons for attempting to generate a positive psychology of suggestion.

REPRESENTATIVE VIEWS OF TEACHING

Criticisms of the Profession. There is some evidence to indicate that teachers often do not have the positive view of their profession that is most conducive to vigorous mental health. This impression may be gathered from comments made by teachers about the negative aspects of

their occupation, such as complaints about low salaries, the difficulty of working with youngsters who manifest no ardent desire to learn, the unreasonable demands placed upon them by narrow-minded members of the school board, and the necessity for attending many afterhours school functions—to cite just a few. A more concrete evidence is that, at teacher workshops, institutes, and conventions, it is almost a tradition to criticize the methods, materials, and philosophy of instruction. By way of contrast, the meetings of other professional people are likely to be occupied with reporting progress made, discoveries unearthed, and techniques improved. This does not imply that no examination of past deficiencies should be made; but it is probable that the mental health of teachers and proper respect from the public would be enhanced by a little less “internal” criticism and more show of professional pride. Another evidence, quite like the foregoing, is that education periodicals carry many articles criticizing teachers and teaching. There are other articles, to be sure, dealing with successful projects, improved techniques, and gratifying experiments, but these seem much less newsworthy than the negative reports. The most severe indictment, however, is that occasionally a teacher who has not the courage to get out of the profession will advise a younger person, “By all means, do not entertain seriously the idea of ever becoming a teacher.”

Advantages Enjoyed by Teachers. If, instead of dwelling upon and magnifying the disadvantages of teaching, we were to concentrate on some of the positive values of the profession, there would be a greater probability of “peace of mind” for teachers. Admittedly, this is a biased position, but it has the advantage of allowing a “positive psychology of suggestion” to operate. Even if it were to mean shutting our eyes to the negative factors (*which is not necessary*), it is a psychological fact that growth is more frequently stimulated by praise than by blame. For the sake of their own mental health, teachers are asked to review, criticize, and evaluate some of the following advantages:

1. Teaching offers an opportunity for professional achievement. A fundamental human desire is to accomplish. In the toddler who insists upon feeding himself and in the person in late maturity who reacts strongly against compulsory retirement, the desire to achieve is evident. Teaching is not unique in providing opportunities and challenges to accomplish; but it is notable for the extent and variety of the avenues it opens to those who would do something that is widely recognized as significant.

There is the challenge to vitalize one's teaching by using contemporary materials, by keeping abreast of current experiments, and by capitalizing upon improved teaching aids. There are abundant stimulations contributed by both general and specialized education periodicals. Extension and

correspondence courses, in-service training committees and classes, and summer schools afford motivations and means to professional achievement. There are some, of course, who look upon these as burdens, rather than opportunities, but it is easy to detect symptoms of mental ill-health in such an attitude. Others perceive and act upon the principle that an effective personal life and genuine emotional security are based upon the process of continual growth. Boredom is, with few exceptions, a person's own fault. Acceptance of the abundant opportunities cited will so occupy one's time as to leave little chance for preoccupation with personal worries. The improvement of service coincident with continued study will eliminate some of the causes of worry and some of the feelings of insecurity.

2. Teaching stimulates one to keep abreast of the times. Effective teachers of our time must not only know what is going on in the professional field but must also be acquainted with the events of the world at large. Democratic teaching, from the first grade through college and university, must present an interpretation of subject matter in terms of out-of-school life. Teachers have the responsibility of possessing information upon which to base effective handling of the many questions that pupils ask, even though these questions seem at times to be only on the periphery of the immediate lesson. This does not demand that teachers should know the answers to all questions. Indeed, teachers who tend to create such an impression are imposing obstacles in the way of the pupils' continued education. Nevertheless, some information about what is going on in contemporary society is part of the equipment that each of us has a right to expect to find in the teachers of our children. This information can be gained from a sensible reading of newspapers; news magazines; periodicals devoted to information, evaluation, and criticism; and serious books by informed authors. Participation in community activities is more and more coming to be considered not only an opportunity but an obligation. Even if we were to ignore the contribution which keeping abreast of the times makes to effective teaching, there would still remain the great value which continuous intellectual growth makes to the preservation of personal mental health.

3. Teaching contributes toward personal satisfaction. There are few jobs which can be regarded as more important than teaching—one exception, probably, is parenthood. America has grown in size and developed in complexity largely by virtue of a firm faith in the personal and civic value of education. While it must be admitted that there are critics of education, especially when it comes to the matter of support, the general consensus is much like the following:

Competent scholars have no doubt that education is one, if not the most important, agency (1) in the development, extension, and dissemination of

civilization, and (2) in raising individuals, the mass of mankind to ever higher levels of understanding, appreciation, achievement, and happiness.¹

Again, in spite of apathy as to support, there are few patrons and few parents who do not recognize the importance of the job the teacher is doing. In fact, the prestige of the teacher has sometimes been an obstacle standing in the way of facile social relations. Too many people are awed by the presence of a teacher. Indeed, the personal satisfaction of teachers in feeling that their job is one of prime importance in helping shape the lives of youth is well founded.

4. The hours of work are reasonable. A six-hour day and a thirty-hour week would not, of course, account for all the time involved in effectively fulfilling the responsibilities of teaching. However, the work beyond the scheduled day can be done at one's convenience, leaving time for the hobbies and personal-growth activities which are so fundamental to sound mental health. Teachers, generally speaking, are not on call as is the doctor. They are not subject to interruptions of work due to strikes ordered by some professional labor organizer. They are uniquely situated with regard to the observation of many holidays, as well as Christmas and spring vacations. Even when the summer months are devoted to study, this brings freedom from routine class duties and a marked change in emphasis. There are summers, too, during which the teacher feels no obligation or pressure to attend school. Though it be granted that freedom is fundamentally a state of mind, it must be admitted that the hours of work are such as to help build up such a feeling.

5. The income is steady and assured. There are cases on record where, because of a temporary lack of funds, the teacher has had to wait for a salary check; but the instances are few in which the pay was never received. In many localities, the teacher's pay is much too low, particularly in view of the responsibility involved, but the income is assured. Barring gross incompetence and moral turpitude, the teacher once employed can feel confident that his employment will continue—at least, through the school year. This allows for a systematic planning that makes it somewhat easier to get along with a salary which is perhaps very close to being inadequate. Even though one is not reengaged in a particular community, the need for teachers makes it quite probable that a position can be found in another location. When a particular school board tires of a teacher, it is not necessary for him to find another type of job and thus forsake his training and experience. As a matter of fact, this assurance of employment and income, this basis for security, is one of the reasons

¹ William H. Burton, *Introduction to Education*, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1934, p. 17. By permission of the publisher, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.

why many who would like to have larger incomes continue to teach. It is a factor that contributes toward good mental health. That adequacy of salary will be added to assuredness of employment is devoutly to be hoped for.

6. Teaching is clean work. There are few jobs which can equal teaching in either physical or psychological cleanliness. A little chalk dust, some scraps of paper, bits of mud, and the characteristic disarray of work in progress constitute whatever there may be of physical uncleanness or confusion. Doctors and dentists have contact with the diseased and decayed; lawyers have to deal with the exacerbations of human emotions; and businessmen encounter much in the way of craftiness, selfishness, and greed. Teachers for the most part deal with people before they become decayed or distorted; or at the worst, these unhappy conditions are caught in the making. It will do the teacher good to look for the "bloom of youth," to see the color in girls' starched pinafores, and the shininess of boys' faces and teeth. There are pupils who need to learn to keep their nails cleaned and there are those who do not enjoy the advantage of a daily bath; but these evidences are also apparent to those who have to deal largely with adults.

7. Teaching provides contact with the enthusiasms of youth. This apparent advantage may also have its negative aspects. It is possible that the optimism, enthusiasm, and confidence of youth are not at all times sound. Perhaps through close contact with these traits, teachers may tend to overlook some of the hazards of life today. On the other hand, the dire forecasts of adults have a disheartening effect. Listening to business-club speakers and to accounts of the disappointments of adults induces a pessimistic mood, which inhibits a vigorous attack upon problems. William H. Mikesell recommends adopting an optimistic attitude in the following words: "As good suggestion, optimism (1) discovers and makes opportunity; (2) organizes the mind and raises efficiency; (3) grows by its own momentum; (4) is strengthened by its own expression; and (5) invites others to promote it."² The last point indicates the direct advantage teachers have through contact with the enthusiasm of youth.

8. Teaching involves a variety of work. There may be some truth in the old saying, "Variety is the spice of life." The very definition of mental health, "the adjustment of individuals to themselves and to the world at large with a maximum of effectiveness, satisfactions, cheerfulness, and socially considerate behavior and the ability to face and accept the realities of life,"³ implies that adjustment is a multifaceted concept. Discus-

² Reprinted by permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc., from *Mental Hygiene*, by William H. Mikesell, copyright 1939 by Prentice-Hall, Inc., p. 156.

³ National Committee for Mental Hygiene, *Mental Hygiene Bulletin*, Vol. 9 (January-February, 1931), p. 1. By permission of the publisher.

sions of mental hygiene make frequent references to the need for well-rounded development. It follows that a life occupation which automatically furnishes variety will be of a kind favorable to mental health.

The challenge to improve techniques and keep abreast of the times, mentioned above, infuses variety into teaching. The typical teacher does not teach the same subjects year after year; the schedule may vary little from the previous year, but a comparison of today's teaching with what was taught ten years ago will bear out this point. Even though the subject may be called by the same name, the specific content will vary considerably. More variety is added in the so-called "extracurricular" responsibilities. The teacher may share, too, in such specialized functions as curriculum reconstruction, counseling, testing and evaluation, the nature and use of teaching aids, research, and the like, which may keep off a tendency to feel that teaching is a boring occupation. Even if, in a given teacher's case, none of the particular forms of variety were included, there would still be variety—that which inheres in the differing nature of the pupil population making up the teacher's class from one year to another. It is not probable that the hypothetical average of a high-school freshman class will be the same this year as it was last; but even if it were, the problems presented by pupil *X* of this year would differ notably from the problems presented by pupil *Y* of the year before. There is always the variety presented by new faces, different backgrounds, varying interests, and the inevitable differences in personality.

9. The profession has a stimulating degree of internal criticism. It has been noted already that the tendency of teachers to criticize their own methods and effectiveness has some disadvantages. However, this critical attitude has an advantage, in that it prevents complacency and thus is stimulating to growth. If teachers can be dissatisfied without becoming discouraged, this characteristic may count as one of the distinct advantages of teaching. It is frequently pointed out by medical authorities and mental hygienists that self-satisfaction contributes both to mental ill-health and to the phenomenon of senescence. Internal criticism should, however, be thoughtfully examined, so that the disadvantages of creating discouragement in the heart of the teacher and implanting the elements of disrespect in the minds of the public will be avoided. As is true of so many other aspects of mental hygiene, moderation and common sense must be used in prescribing the dosage.

10. Teaching affords association with professional coworkers. Objective studies indicate that there are persons engaged in teaching who do not have the kind and/or amount of personality traits that are desired in the teachers of our young people. On the other hand, the great majority of teachers are healthy, happy, and admirable. Other professions, too, have the opportunity of association with professional coworkers. Nevertheless,

there are indications that the typical educational coworker is above average as an effective personality.

We see before us, then, a great procession. . . . For the most part it is a youthful aggregation, and made up in large measure of women. Here is a mighty army of intelligent Americans, counting among their numbers representatives of all our races, all our nationalities, all our creeds. From the farm they have come, from the small towns, from the cities, great and small. Every corner, every crossroads of the nation is represented.⁴

During the last war the writer saw schoolteachers effectively assuming responsible leadership positions in a wide variety of military activities. The ease with which they made their adjustments was frequently commented upon by the regular (life-career) military personnel. Dr. James F. Bender, director of the National Institute for Human Relations, told the Connecticut Education Association at a meeting in 1948 that schoolteachers were the top candidates for wives and listed ten specific reasons to justify the statement.

1. They are above average in health, beauty and intelligence.
2. They have a deep affection for children.
3. They are eager to marry, wish to bear two or more children.
4. They have well-protected jobs, safe during a recession.
5. They have nice voices and don't talk too much.
6. Their regular hours and frequent vacations permit them to be good housewives.
7. Their studious habits and common sense are invaluable to young men starting in business or a profession.
8. Their high ideals make them lovable, tender, sympathetic and understanding beyond the average.
9. They are established in jobs and ready for marriage at the golden age for it—22 to 25 years.
10. Divorce is rare among teachers.⁵

Studies of the mental health of teachers show varying results, and opinions vary still more widely, but at least some studies indicate that the mental health of teachers is slightly above that of the average run of the population as indicated by the percentage of institutionalization.⁶ The educational requirements of the profession are for a minimum of education that is beyond the average of the general population, and the actual average is somewhat higher than the required minimum. Thus, a teacher has an opportunity for contact with informed people.

⁴ Commission on Teacher Education, *Teachers for Our Times*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1944, p. 10. By permission of the publisher.

⁵ International News Service, Hartford, Conn., Nov. 5, 1948.

⁶ Norman Fenton, *Mental Hygiene in School Practice*, Stanford University, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1946, p. 287.

Besides the objective evidences of the quality of associations available within the profession, there are some subjective estimates that point to the same factor. A continual process of "weeding-out" takes place. Teachers who are unable to conduct themselves in accordance with the mores of the community in which they work find that they are unhappy and quit, or the officials in charge do not reissue their contracts. Few enter, or continue in, a teaching career with the impression that it is a sinecure. Hence, they either have a willingness to work or are motivated by a desire to be of service, or both. The fact that teachers, when they get together, frequently "talk shop" can mean that their work is a fundamental part of their lives just as easily as it might mean that they have no other interests.

The Point of View and Advantages of Teaching. Many of the above-cited "advantages" are subject to question. Certainly some of them may be regarded as disadvantages, instead. For example, having to deal with the enthusiasms of youth may test one's patience beyond endurance. Variety of work may possibly interfere with developing a high degree of competence in any one area. The hours of work may be too long, considering the amount of mental and emotional energy consumed during the time spent on the job. Internal criticism has been known to reach the point of engendering discouragement. Steady and assured income does not, in a capitalistic and competitive society, adequately offset a salary which is too low. Pressures put upon the teacher to attend evening classes and summer school are certainly a burden to many teachers. The fact remains, however, that one can take the point of view, which is conducive to mental health, of recognizing the real advantages. An individual's own attitude determines, to a large extent, what kind of psychology of suggestion shall operate. The fable of the three blind men and the elephant is more than entertaining; it is instructive. The significance of the point of view is illustrated in the words, "Two young men looked through the bars, one at the mud and one at the stars." We have all known persons—and not teachers alone—who habitually see all the negative aspects of a situation and are apparently blind to any existing advantages.

DISADVANTAGES THAT NEED ATTENTION

It would, of course, be unwise to recommend a distorted view of any profession—a view that does not take into consideration the fact that it entails some problems needing study and action. The foregoing discussion was not intended to create the impression that only a confirmed pessimist could see negative elements in the teaching profession. Some of the things that need to be done to make teaching a still more salutary influence for mental health warrant the attention of even the most optimistic of teachers.

Community Demands Must Be Evaluated. One of the frequently cited disadvantages of teaching is that the community makes unreasonable demands on the teacher. It is probably true that "where there is smoke there is fire" and that some communities do make unreasonable demands. The dividing line between what is a reasonable expectation and what is an unreasonable demand is not easy to establish. For instance, many people do not regard the teacher's smoking as a matter for public concern—certainly not as an indication of immorality. In most cases, it is unreasonable to insist upon nonsmoking teachers. However, in a community composed of a particular religious group which views smoking as an evidence of moral turpitude and in which most adults abstain from tobacco, the demand might not appear so unreasonable. It seems unreasonable that teachers should be expected to do all their buying in the particular community where they earn their salaries—especially if prices there are higher and a wide selection of goods is not available. In individual cases, requiring the teacher to live in the community may be unreasonable. For instance, a teacher was given the ultimatum that she would have to live in the community or her contract would not be renewed. It made no difference that she lived six miles across the river with her mother, who owned her own home, and that in the school's community there was a marked housing shortage caused by a rapid growth in population. On the other hand, a school board required its teachers to live in the community because the teachers who were living in adjoining metropolitan areas were so frequently late to work, on account of the uncertainty of traffic conditions.

The foregoing examples, however, are exceptional cases. Most teachers have not been hampered by any such stated restrictions. For the most part, the community makes only one demand and that, an entirely reasonable one; namely, that teachers be gentlemen and ladies. If you were to view yourself as a parent, realizing the great influence of the teacher, you would probably be inclined to support this requirement. "Isn't it fair to assume that 'of them to whom much is entrusted, much will be expected?'"⁷ If it is difficult for you to imagine yourself in the role of a parent, you might visualize the situation by thinking of the kind of teacher you would like your younger brother or sister to have.

Most teachers do not feel that they have been unnecessarily hedged about by community demands. The author has much more frequently encountered the anticipation of restriction by those who were preparing to teach than a criticism of restriction by experienced teachers. The following may be considered typical of the experienced teacher's attitude:

⁷ Pauline Dudley, "I'm Glad I'm a Teacher," *National Education Association Journal*, Vol. 38 (November, 1949), p. 579. By permission of the National Education Association.

As for one's personal life within teaching, I have never been able to believe the refrain that to choose to be a teacher means to renounce many of the so-called pleasures of normal human existence; that one's living will become public conversational property, subject to close scrutiny and governed by someone other than oneself. While it is true that people in a community are often very much interested in their teachers and the lives they live, I have never sensed that it is a malicious interest.⁸

It is probable that, if the teacher takes seriously the responsibility for seeing to it that children are absorbed into the constructive phases of community life, there will be less occasion for feeling that community demands are unnecessarily restrictive. One's own attitude is as important as are the demands themselves.

Teacher Loads Should Be Reduced. It is a fundamental postulate of psychology that learning is an individual matter. Teachers teach only individuals. Studies of teacher load indicate that effectiveness is reduced when elementary classes are in excess of twenty-five pupils and when high-school classes exceed thirty-five in membership. Effectiveness is curtailed by inability to cope with individual differences, as well as by the emotional strain that is generated under the pressure of many different and energetic individuals. Excessively large classes are a handicap to both teacher and pupils.

Teachers' Salaries Should Be Improved. Great gains have been made in recent years in the absolute amounts paid to teachers. Unfortunately, for the sake of mental health, salaries in some states are still pitifully low. Even in states where salaries are high and recent gains have been recorded, the gain is frequently more apparent than real; that is, the purchasing power of the dollar has declined so precipitously that the high salary of today will purchase no more than the lower salary of an earlier decade. This leaves the teacher in comparatively as low a state as he was before the increases were granted. Consequently, financial worries are just as troublesome now as then. The most unfortunate consequence of all is that the monetary remuneration is not sufficient to attract into the profession as many fine young men and women as would like to come and as have the qualifications. It is, therefore, suggested that teachers continue to work on the problem of improved salaries, but through organized and directed effort rather than by means of the carping criticism and querulous discussions that have all too frequently been their futile protest in the past.

Working Conditions Should Be Improved. Many school systems have made pioneering steps in the direction of improving working conditions for teachers. Use of the school building by teachers for purposes of

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 578. By permission of the National Education Association.

recreation, when they are entirely free from supervisory responsibilities, has been granted. This includes use of the gymnasium, time for reading the new acquisitions to the library, use of the arts and crafts laboratories, designated periods to work in the woodworking and mechanical arts shops, and scheduled use of the school for parties for themselves and their friends without interruption by pupils. Such provisions serve the dual purpose of helping the teachers keep mentally healthy, through "well-rounded" development, and of making them better acquainted with the facilities of the school—in terms of both material and human resources.

Rest rooms for teachers are being provided in many currently constructed buildings. There must also be arrangement for planned periods when the teachers can use the rooms, free of student interference. Each teacher should have an hour a day, between 8:30 and 4:00—or whatever the school hours are—which will be his own. If it is necessary for some teacher to be on duty between 12:00 and 1:00, then he should have time to eat a leisurely and uninterrupted lunch between 11:00 and 12:00 or between 1:00 and 2:00. It is to be hoped that administrators and the public will soon realize that these benefits are not gifts to the teachers, not a "coddling" of prima donnas, but an investment in better teaching effectiveness.

Provision should be made for medical examination *and treatment*. The annual examination to see whether the teacher is free of tuberculosis is not sufficient. Medical examinations should be frequent and thorough enough to serve as a preventive, as well as a cure. Proper planning should make it possible for teachers to avail themselves of adequate treatment. Perhaps we are still a long way from it, but the medical care provided should include psychiatric services. Availability of such psychiatric services will set forward by a long step the education of teachers in the role of mental health and the operation of mental hygiene principles in the lives of young people.

Other Factors Needing Attention. Other aspects of teacher welfare which would result in a better mental hygiene setting for them might well include the following: (1) provision for participation in the administration of the school; (2) improved policies relating to sick leave, so that teachers would not have additional strain added to their physical illnesses; (3) extension of retirement programs, so that the threat of retirement would not hover so ominously; (4) salary schedules which would provide incentive for staying in the profession and motivation for the improvement of services rendered while in it; (5) help for teachers through a wider provision of special services for children—mental hygiene specialists, vocational guidance experts, academic counselors, reading specialists, visiting teachers, and school nurses.

THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE PROFESSION

A balanced view of the teaching profession can hardly be achieved by looking at it as something quite apart from the person engaging in it. The teacher needs to view himself as an active, living part of the profession. Teaching presents opportunities and privileges in proportion to the individual's ability to profit from them. There is a reciprocal relationship between the teacher and the profession. Good teachers will appreciate the advantages. The advantages will more readily accrue to good teachers. In this section, some of the characteristics of good teachers will be examined for the purpose of helping both experienced and inexperienced teachers set some goals for personal development—goals which will, in the long run, make the profession increasingly desirable and enhance personal mental health.

Personality Traits of Good Teachers. There has been a great deal of speculation and some research (for the most part unproductive) regarding the answer to the question, What are the personality traits of a good teacher? The opinions of experts have been solicited. Professional co-workers have been queried. Children have been asked to name the qualities of personality possessed by their most liked and most effective teachers. But the answer remains elusive.

One list of personal qualifications, for example, which would supposedly improve the disciplinary situation included the following: (1) attractive appearance, (2) pleasant voice, (3) interest in children, (4) good disposition, (5) decisiveness.⁹ Yet the author knows someone who left the work because of disciplinary failure, although she had all these qualifications. Undoubtedly, possession of satisfactory qualifications along these lines would tend to eliminate many disciplinary problems, and it cannot be denied that the qualities indicated are highly desirable. The intention here is to convey the idea that what is significant as one teacher's assets may be relatively unimportant in another teacher's success. In short, what makes one teacher a liability may in another case be just the thing that presents a challenge to the students of another teacher. Specifically, many lists place intelligence high on the list of teacher qualifications; and, in general, it is not to be denied that most wise principals will select those teacher candidates who have demonstrated that they possess high intelligence. One principal of a large city system who had a reputation for selecting outstanding teachers told the story of making a particular effort to hire a slow-learning teacher. He knew her before she entered college—in fact, had encouraged her to enter and take an education major. She had difficulty in college, and the principal, who knew

⁹ I. N. Thut and J. Raymond Gerberich, *Foundations of Method for Secondary Schools*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949, pp. 429-430.

some of the college officials, interceded in her behalf. "Evaluation," rather than "grading," was applied and the girl got her degree. She had been teaching a number of years when the principal told his story and he concluded with, "Heaven help the administrator who tries to take her away from me without letting me know he is bidding for her services. She is one of very few who really knows what learning difficulties are, and she does an excellent job in the ——— [a minority group] section of my city."

Enthusiasm, optimism, initiative, and resourcefulness are qualities frequently mentioned in lists of teacher attributes. Again, these factors are, in general, highly desirable. But some successful teachers replace enthusiasm with a high degree of order and teach students both information and desirable personal habits. Some students are stimulated by pessimistic teachers, some are motivated more by routines than they are by a variety of approaches. An occasional student will intentionally select a teacher who has a reputation for being sarcastic—a trait that is almost universally condemned.

Moreover, qualities which are desirable at one level of teaching may be less necessary for a teacher of another level. Thus, the factor of considerateness is ranked high by supervisors of the elementary grades, while it receives a very low rank among high-school teachers. William H. Burton asks, "Is this a recognition of the hard-boiled sophistication of the harder groups at the upper level? Similarly, refinement is highly important on the lower levels, but, according to this ranking, would evidently be wasted in the higher grades!"¹⁰

What, Then, Are Good Teachers Like? It is difficult to define the successful teaching personality. The problem is not answered by resort to precisely defined lists of isolated traits. Yet we all know that there are differences in the effectiveness of two different teachers, just as there are differences between the personalities of two effective teachers.

A more fruitful approach to finding an answer to the question is to abandon the trait concept and to examine teachers at their work. This approach has been used by two national organizations. The results, described in the following paragraphs, provide some definite statements of skills and knowledges toward which the teacher might work.

1. The answer given by the American Council on Education: The book, *Teachers for Our Times*, published by the Council, lists the following as qualities needed in teachers:¹¹

¹⁰ William H. Burton, *Introduction to Education*, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1934, p. 801. By permission of the publisher, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.

¹¹ Commission on Teacher Education, *Teachers for Our Times*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1944, pp. 154-173.

They should have a respect for the growth and freedom of personality.

They should have a feeling of genuine community-mindedness manifested in friendly relations and a willingness to adapt themselves to local mores.

They should be able to deal rationally with personal and educational problems.

They should possess skill in cooperation, so that "we" feelings and "we" objectives are facilitated.

They should possess knowledge and skill in professional areas.

They should not only possess knowledge but see to it that their fund of information is continually growing.

Teachers must be able to translate their knowledge into terms that are understandable to the particular individuals whom they are teaching.

Teachers must have a friendliness with children—a genuine affection for young people.

Friendliness must be reinforced with an understanding of the growth and development of children.

They should possess extraordinary understanding of society and be in accord with the underlying convictions which characterize that society.

The teacher should be an effective citizen not only in society in general but also within the restricted environment of the school.

Teachers should possess skill in the evaluation of the activity and progress of their pupils and also the ability to evaluate themselves.

Teachers should have a profound conviction of the worth of teaching.

2. The answer given by the U.S. Office of Education: Frances V. Rummell, Specialist for Service to Organizations, of the U.S. Office of Education, after describing in detail the characteristics and activities of teachers who were deemed to be "distinguished examples of the best professional talent in the Nation's classrooms today," made the following generalizations about them:

First, professionally alert, they are not sitting out the teacher crises on remote little islands of self-containment. Several of them have had drawn-out struggles with their souls in order to stick to teaching when better-paying jobs from outside the profession tempted them. But at least all of them see teaching as the way to make a rich life, if barely a living. Whatever they doubt, it is never the importance of their work.

My second generalization—not unrelated to the first: these teachers have plenty of convictions about their profession. For example: If it is considered conventional for an elementary teacher to aspire to a high school position, and for a high school teacher to aspire to a college position, or for any classroom teacher to aspire to an administrative post, then these teachers are unconventional. Moreover, they are impatient with the mores of a pro-

fession that perpetuates, in its own ranks, the tradition, "The higher the grade the greater the professional prestige" (and consequently the salary) of the teacher.

Third—and this generalization may be surprising until we think it through—these teachers had nothing whatever to say about taboos on personal liberties. I wanted to find out how good teachers manage to put up with all the little indignities that, in some communities, reduce the profession to a state of nervous dissimulation or colorless neutrality. But there simply was not any active problem of the kind. The teachers felt no cramping restrictions because there weren't any. For all the freedom of social mores they enjoy, they could be doctors, lawyers, or merchant chiefs.¹²

Specialist Rummell then goes on to remark that these qualities are not enough; they must be blended together in a workable pattern. The blending agent is artistry in human relations, a matter which is difficult to define, but which is easy to observe in democratic classrooms. She does, however, indicate what she believes to be some of the factors which constitute "artistry in human relations."

As might be assumed, persons who are gifted in the art of human relations have a high degree of sensitivity to children's problems. These teachers may not call it mental hygiene when they understand and help to condition social behavior, but what else could this teacher have been talking about when he said to me, "No normal kid is ever deliberately bad. He's goaded by something. It's up to the teacher to find out what."

... they talk in human terms of good will, of stumbling personalities, of creating an atmosphere of dignity for the child. They talk about understanding the child and about the urgency of teaching him, by example and by precept, the principles of democratic living.

... Above everything else, these teachers are realistic about the high calling of their profession. They are poignantly aware that under their influence this raw material may also change its very destiny.¹³

Such summaries as the foregoing may appear to be disheartening to those teachers who do not feel that they possess these qualities and attitudes. But the very fact that the American Council on Education and the U.S. Office of Education would write about them is an indication that it is felt that they are knowledges and attitudes that can be acquired. They can and should be considered as goals toward which to work. Even the outstanding teachers reported by Rummell felt that there was work to

¹² Frances V. Rummell, "What Are Good Teachers Like?" *School Life*, Vol. 30 (July, 1948), pp. 9-10. (This article is the second of two articles, both of which are highly recommended for reading and study, dealing with the question of "Good Teachers." The first is in Vol. 30 (June, 1948), pp. 4-8, and the second in Vol. 30 (July, 1948), pp. 7-11.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

be done, ". . . they are not sitting out the teacher crisis on remote little islands of self-containment," they are actively engaged in trying to improve their work. There would be a vast improvement of teaching services throughout the nation if all teachers were honestly to attempt merely to do the best they could and leave perfection to a few.

The attitude of the teacher is, as has been frequently indicated, a basic factor. It is probable that the teachers upon whom Rummell reported have had experiences typical of the average teacher, yet they *felt* no confining restrictions being placed upon them by the community.

The fact that attitude is basic is also illustrated in another characteristic of good teachers. Rummell did not mention it, but a fourth conclusion could have been drawn from her articles, *i.e.*, "Good teachers are growing teachers." In every one of the teachers she described this factor is evident. Some of them were experimenting within their classes, others were applying techniques they had read about, many attended summer school regularly, others availed themselves of opportunities to engage in workshops and evening classes. Instead of viewing these activities as hazards or drawbacks, they regarded them as opportunities. Again, from the standpoint of personal growth and individual mental hygiene, a favorable view of study and experimentation is necessary; from the standpoint of effective education also, it is essential.

By way of summary, it can be said that good teachers are mentally healthy individuals. This implies all that has been said with regard to the way they work in the classroom, but it is vital also to understand that their personal life outside the classroom must provide satisfactions. The healthy personality will find satisfaction in contact with adults, teachers and nonteachers; provision will be made for physical exercise and repose; hobbies which give play to a variety of capacities should be followed; pleasures for the sake of pleasures must find indulgence.

THE TEACHER'S CODE OF ETHICS

Administrators sometimes say that many injustices to individual pupils would be averted if teachers were acquainted with, and would recognize, the "Teacher's Code of Ethics." Such knowledge, widely practiced, would result in further strengthening the profession. But acquaintance with the code of ethics has an intimate personal advantage for the teacher, as well. To those who are contemplating entering the teaching field it should be a kind of test for their own aptitude for teaching. If they can subscribe to the statements in the code, they are more likely to find satisfaction in their work. It should provide those who are now teaching a means of evaluating their own role in giving additional prestige to their profession. It is highly recommended that teachers become thoroughly acquainted with the following statements regarding the ethics of teaching.

If the statement needs improvement, the way to accomplish this is through constructive criticism and group action—not by personal repudiation.

*Code of Ethics for the
National Education Association of the United States*

PREAMBLE

BELIEVING: That true democracy can best be achieved by a process of free public education made available to all the children of all the people;

That the teachers in the United States have a large and inescapable responsibility in fashioning the ideals of children and youth;

That such responsibility requires the services of men and women of high ideals, broad education, and profound human understanding; and, in order that the aims of democratic education may be realized more fully, that the welfare of the teaching profession may be promoted, and;

That teachers may observe proper standards of conduct in their professional relations, the National Education Association of the United States proposes this code of ethics for its members.

The term "teacher" as used in this code shall include all persons engaged in educational work, whether in a teaching, an administrative, or a supervisory capacity.

ARTICLE I. RELATIONS TO PUPILS AND THE HOME

Section 1. It is the duty of the teacher to be just, courteous, and professional in all his relations with pupils. He should consider their individual differences, needs, interests, temperaments, aptitudes, and environments.

Section 2. He should refrain from tutoring pupils of his classes for pay, and from referring such pupils to any member of his immediate family for tutoring.

Section 3. The professional relations of a teacher with his pupils demand the same scrupulous care that is required in the confidential relations of one teacher with another. A teacher, therefore, should not disclose any information obtained confidentially from his pupils, unless it is for the best interest of the child and the public.

Section 4. A teacher should seek to establish friendly and intelligent co-operation between home and school, ever keeping in mind the dignity of his profession and the welfare of the pupils. He should do or say nothing that would undermine the confidence and respect of his pupils for their parents. He should inform the pupils and parents regarding the importance, purposes, accomplishments, and needs of the schools.

ARTICLE II. RELATIONS TO CIVIC AFFAIRS

Section 1. It is the obligation of every teacher to inculcate in his pupils an appreciation of the principles of democracy. He should direct full and free discussion of appropriate controversial issues with the expectation that comparisons, contrasts, and interpretations will lead to an understanding, appre-

ciation, acceptance, and practice of the principles of democracy. A teacher should refrain from using his classroom privileges and prestige to promote partisan politics, sectarian religious views, or selfish propaganda of any kind.

Section 2. A teacher should recognize and perform all the duties of citizenship. He should subordinate his personal desires to the best interests of the public good. He should be loyal to the school system, the state, and the nation, but should exercise his right to give constructive criticisms.

Section 3. A teacher's life should show that education makes people better citizens and better neighbors. His personal conduct should not needlessly offend the accepted pattern of behavior of the community in which he serves.

ARTICLE III. RELATIONS TO THE PROFESSION

Section 1. Each member of the teaching profession should dignify his calling on all occasions and should uphold the importance of his services to society. On the other hand, he should not indulge in personal exploitation.

Section 2. A teacher should encourage able and sincere individuals to enter the teaching profession and discourage those who plan to use this profession merely as a stepping stone to some other vocation.

Section 3. It is the duty of the teacher to maintain his own efficiency by study, by travel, and by other means which keep him abreast of the trends in education and the world in which he lives.

Section 4. Every teacher should have membership in his local, state, and national professional organizations, and should participate actively and unselfishly in them. Professional growth and personality development are the natural product of such professional activity. Teachers should avoid the promotion of organization rivalry and divisive competition which weaken the cause of education.

Section 5. While not limiting their services by reason of small salary, teachers should insist upon a salary scale commensurate with the social demands laid upon them by society. They should not knowingly underbid a rival or agree to accept a salary lower than that provided by a recognized schedule. They should not apply for positions for the sole purpose of forcing an increase in salary in their present positions; correspondingly, school officials should not refuse to give deserved salary increases to efficient employees until offers from other school authorities have forced them to do so.

Section 6. A teacher should not apply for a specific position currently held by another teacher. Unless the rules of a school system otherwise prescribe, he should file his application with the chief executive officer.

Section 7. Since qualification should be the sole determining factor in appointment and promotion, the use of pressure on school officials to secure a position or to obtain other favors is unethical.

Section 8. Testimonials regarding teachers should be truthful and confidential, and should be treated as confidential information by the school authorities receiving them.

Section 9. A contract, once signed, should be faithfully adhered to until it is dissolved by mutual consent. Ample notification should be given both by school officials and teachers in case a change in position is to be made.

Section 10. Democratic procedures should be practiced by members of the teaching profession. Cooperation should be predicated upon the recognition of the worth and the dignity of individual personality. All teachers should observe the professional courtesy of transacting official business with the properly designated authority.

Section 11. School officials should encourage and nurture the professional growth of all teachers by promotion or by other appropriate methods of recognition. School officials who fail to recommend a worthy teacher for a better position outside their school system because they do not desire to lose his services are acting unethically.

Section 12. A teacher should avoid unfavorable criticism of other teachers except that formally presented to a school official for the welfare of the school. It is unethical to fail to report to the duly constituted authority any matters which are detrimental to the welfare of the school.

Section 13. Except when called upon for counsel or other assistance, a teacher should not interfere in any matter between another teacher and a pupil.

Section 14. A teacher should not act as an agent, or accept a commission, royalty, or other compensation, for endorsing books or other school materials in the selection or purchase of which he can exert influence, or concerning which he can exercise the right of decision; nor should he accept a commission or other compensation for helping another teacher to secure a position.¹⁴

SUMMARY

The mental health of the teacher will, among many other contributing factors, be conditioned by his or her attitude toward the profession. If we adopt an objective viewpoint we must certainly admit that there are some negative aspects attached to teaching; *e.g.*, low salaries, community pressures, duties beyond those regularly scheduled, and the feeling that the work of every teacher should be improved. The objective view must also admit that there are many positive advantages. Worthy of consideration among the advantages are: (1) opportunity for professional advancement, (2) stimulation to keep abreast of the times, (3) personal satisfactions of achievement available, (4) reasonable hours of work, (5) an assured and steady income, (6) cleanliness of the work, (7) contact with the enthusiasms of youth, (8) variety of tasks involved, (9) a healthy degree of internal criticism, (10) opportunities for association with professional coworkers. Both the advantages and the disadvantages of teaching are equivocal. In the final analysis, judgment is largely dependent upon the viewpoint which individual teachers adopt and develop. The mental hygiene viewpoint recommends the positive outlook.

¹⁴ Used by permission of the National Education Association.

There are some disadvantages that need attention. These disadvantages cannot be overcome by stating them and then leaving the profession. They can be surmounted only by those who regard them as professional and personal challenges to continued growth. Among the problems that warrant attention are: (1) amelioration of unreasonable community demands; (2) reduction of teacher loads so that genuine attention can be given to individual differences; (3) improvement of teachers' salaries; (4) improvement of working conditions so that better provision is made for "the well-rounded life"; (5) depending on the local situation, other conditions requiring attention are participation in administration, sick leave, retirement provisions, salary schedules, and the provision of special services which will increase educational efficiency.

A positive view of the profession cannot be achieved by looking at it as something dissociated from the individual teacher. Each teacher must see to it that individual responsibility is assumed for the enhancement of the profession. Our first responsibility is to develop those personal traits that will count toward maximum effectiveness. Friendliness, enthusiasm, optimism, initiative, and resourcefulness are worthy of continuous cultivation. Joy in one's work is achieved by actively seeking personal growth—through the many avenues that are opened. All these things add up to an artistry in human relations. "In teaching, you have an opportunity to be a creative artist, administrator, scholar, business executive, salesperson, personal counselor. Teaching will call forth every hidden bit of talent you may have, every bit of knowledge you have somehow attained, and always leave you with a thirst for more experience, more learning."¹⁵

Study and application of the teacher's code of ethics may contribute to the profession of teaching in three ways: (1) presenting a test of suitability for those who are contemplating the work, (2) providing a means whereby teachers can evaluate their own roles, (3) offering some concrete criteria of mental health.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Engage some teachers in conversation about the teaching profession. Are their criticisms (if any) justified? Are their criticisms based on a negative or a positive viewpoint?
2. Are any of the so-called "advantages" cited in the text not really advantages? State your reasons.
3. Can you think of any advantages not listed? What are they?
4. Consult some current periodicals (using the *Education Index*) and find and report some articles descriptive of the teacher's mental health.
5. Describe some unreasonable community demands that you have en-

¹⁵ Dudley, *op. cit.*, p. 579. By permission of the National Education Association.

countered or that you have heard about. Are you at present—or were you in your last position—subject to such demands?

6. Can you suggest any means of reducing teacher load that would not necessitate the addition of more staff members?

7. Draw up a plan for improving working conditions within some school with which you are well acquainted.

8. Suggest some plans for improving a specific desirable trait of teachers. Compare your results with a classmate who has devised a plan for improving another specific trait.

9. How might we, as teachers, develop the habit of friendliness?

10. Describe your concept of "artistry in human relations."

11. Cite some examples of the violation of the teacher's code of ethics. Are there any items to which you need to give attention?

12. How can the code of ethics make a contribution to your personal mental health?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

AXTELLE, GEORGE E., and WILLIAM W. WATTENBERG (eds.), *Teachers for Democracy*, Fourth Yearbook of the John Dewey Society, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1940. 412 pp.

The contributors to this volume have stated their views of the advantages and disadvantages of present teacher education plans for enhancing the democratic way of life. General education, professional education, and education in-service are among the topics considered. Teachers will find personal challenge in the materials presented.

Commission on Teacher Education, *Teachers for Our Times*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1944. 178 pp.

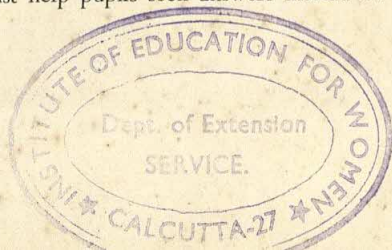
The qualities needed in teachers are described in light of the background of American education. The background consists of the description of our society, teacher-preparation institutions, and the children who comprise the school population.

PERRY, BLISS, *And Gladly Teach*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1935. 315 pp.

Bliss Perry's reminiscences provide a clue to the rich advantages which are possible for a creative teacher. The book will provide inspiration for developing those teacher traits which make for artistry in human relationships. The life of the mind and of the spirit which is available to teachers is vividly portrayed.

SMITH, MORTIMER, *And Madly Teach*, Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1949. 107 pp.

"A Layman Looks at Public School Education" (subtitle) and finds many defective elements. Teachers need to become and remain human beings. They need to provide freedom for pupil growth so pupils do not become replicas of imperfect human beings. Teachers must help pupils seek answers instead of giving answers.



LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Assignment Tomorrow, National Education Association, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. (20 min, BW, sd.)

A portrayal of how teachers work cooperatively to foster healthier, better informed, and happier children.

Learning through Cooperative Planning, Teachers College, Columbia University, Bureau of Publications, New York 27. (22 min, BW, sd.)

This shows, for all age groups, how children acquire one of the important skills of this day—effective participation as a group member. The work concerned is a community beautification project.

Teaching, Carl F. Mahnke Productions, 215 East 3d St., Des Moines 9, Iowa. (11 min, BW, sd.)

Qualifications necessary for success in the largest of all professions. Advantages and rewards are shown. Activities in the modern school, the teacher's place in the community, and areas of specialization are considered.

Who Will Teach Your Child?, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42d St., New York 36. (24 min, BW, sd.)

Poses a serious question for teachers and parents. Suggests some solutions in the way of attracting people of superior talents into teaching. Suggests some concepts of what good teaching is and what it is worth.

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THE TEACHER'S PHILOSOPHY— IN THE SCHOOL

IN A SENSE, this chapter is a continuation of the previous one. We have seen that there are some mental health values to be derived from a positive view of the profession. Certain advantages, when adequately appreciated, can fortify a teacher with a positive psychology of suggestion. The disadvantages can be minimized by being placed in proper perspective and by being considered as offering a challenge to personal and professional development. Mention was made of the teacher's role which would tend to promote mental health for himself and his pupils.

But there is more that might well be said concerning what can contribute to maximum effectiveness in teaching and in personal living. The next chapter will deal with the teacher's personal philosophy, with special attention devoted to implementing certain principles of effective mental hygiene. This chapter is concerned with the teacher's professional philosophy. We shall leave the formal philosophies of education—idealism, realism, and pragmatism—to another professional course. Here the concern is with some everyday problems of functioning in the total school program. They will be discussed under the headings of various responsibilities.

RESPONSIBILITY TO PUPILS

America's Faith in Children. Since the beginning of our national history, Americans have manifested a faith in children. Constant emphasis has been placed on the importance of education to bring about the fullest realization of the potentialities inherent in children. As each new community was established, three important steps were taken: building a home, building a church, and building a school. The pronouncements on education made by our national leaders—the historical characters children study in school—are frequently cited as targets for today. But this faith in children is but a reflection, or perhaps a manifestation, of other basic faiths. The ideals held by Americans are what have made the kind of people we are, the kind of government we have, and the kind of schools

in which we study. These ideals—these faiths—are worth reviewing because of their importance for teachers and teaching.

1. Americans have an abiding faith in freedom. This faith is manifested in the establishment and maintenance of popular government. But it is recognized that freedom involves responsibility and accountability, so that one person's freedom shall not limit that of another. It is recognized that faith in freedom and popular government is dependent upon abundant educational opportunity for all. Teachers are at the heart of this ideal.

2. Americans have a respect for personality. Though it is recognized that there are differences in ability, this respect for personality is reflected in the words, "All men are created equal." All are deserving of respect, all are entitled to freedom, all are worthy of justice. Differences in personality, in potentiality, are fundamental to our way of life. It is obligatory that teachers recognize and stimulate the development of these essential differences.

3. Americans stress the significance of self-development. Our schools and our national life are posited on faith in growth processes. This ideal is not limited to persons; it applies to our way of life, as well. We do not believe that we have reached perfection, but there is a conviction that (a) our culture is superior to others and that (b) we are on the way to higher realization. But this realization is dependent upon the individual components of society—particularly upon those who are attending school.

4. Americans believe in the reign of group intelligence. We are convinced that reason, coupled with idealism, can perpetuate and improve the heritage in which we take such pride. Debate, discussion, persuasion, and the pooling of opinion are regarded as the techniques for revealing group intelligence. The habits that are involved in these techniques are not instinctive; they are not inborn; they must be developed by experience and education. Nor, when once these processes have been acquired, can we forget them. They must be periodically regenerated for each new generation. The school and the teacher are of highest importance in seeing to it that all these faiths are implemented through faith in children.

Implementing Our Faith in Children. Schools are ostensibly established for the purpose of preserving our American ideals. It goes without saying that a democratic society is not possible without the enlightenment of its components. There must be an abiding loyalty to the basic convictions—even though the functioning of the ideal may change to fit the time and circumstance.

Teachers and schools . . . are the means that society specially creates and employs for passing on the cultural heritage and for developing the powers

of children and young people. Evidently it is not possible to set up intelligent goals either for the schools or for the education of teachers in the United States without referring closely to the tradition our society intends to preserve, to the problems our society is having to meet.¹

Indeed, it has always been evident to Americans that if democracy is to work well, education must not only be universal but must be planned and carried out with due reference to the responsibilities of citizenship.²

Many suggestions have been given throughout this book that would serve to implement basic faiths of our society. We can recapitulate by referring to each of the above-mentioned convictions. Faith in freedom can be perpetuated by allowing pupils in the school to see it in operation. They can exercise freedom by taking part in planning procedures, by being permitted freedom of movement and discussion, and by learning that what each one does has a bearing on the functioning of his peers.

Respect for personality can be cultivated by recognizing the contributions that are uniquely made by each pupil. This would mean, among other things, that the teacher does not establish some one, single criterion of accomplishment. Actually, there is little call for regimentation of activity or accomplishment in a democratic society. Nor is it operationally possible, in view of the existence of wide individual differences. Some pupils will, of course, excel in academic accomplishment, but others can make their contribution through physical skill, artistic creations, leadership qualities, or mechanical aptitude.

A functional faith in self-development is dependent upon a recognition of the different potentialities residing in pupils. Two facts concerning growth are particularly important for the teacher to understand. First, he must realize that different kinds of growth (mental, physical, emotional) have significance; hence, there will be no overlooking any of these as increased knowledge is sought in school. Second, he must realize that growth in any area will take place at different rates in different children. The lock-step tradition of education is not in harmony with our present interpretation of fundamental ideals.

It should be a simple matter to put into practice our faith in group intelligence. Many teachers are making use of discussion, debate, individual reports, and pupil evaluation to make their classwork more effective. They are, at the same time, giving pupils a chance to recognize the practical wisdom of the group. Each year brings an increase in the use of such procedures. Recitation as lesson hearing is being replaced by

¹ Commission on Teacher Education, *Teachers for Our Times*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1944, pp. 30-31. By permission of the publisher.

² *Ibid.*, p. 33. By permission of the publisher.

what is known as socialized recitation. Even at the college level, where the lecture system has had a firm hold, there is reported steady gain in the adoption of student participation. Making provision for the exchange of information and opinion is not the difficult part of the procedure. What needs emphasis is the manifesting of confidence in the conclusions derived by the processes involved in the meeting of minds. Teachers who recognize the merit in group intelligence and, when possible, encourage translating the conclusions into action are doing more than teaching. They are helping to perpetuate our cultural heritage.

The Teacher's Responsibility to Children. The twentieth century has been called the "century of the child" because of the rapid gains that have been made in the treatment and understanding of children. But our "knowin' is often a fur piece from our doin'." If those in the focal position for reflecting America's faith in children—teachers—are to perform their proper function, then it is necessary that they both know and do. They must, in short, keep acquainted with the reconstruction of theories and new discoveries relating to the nature and needs of children. This responsibility is partially discharged by their studying academic courses in biology, psychology, sociology, mental hygiene, and philosophy. Some of the responsibility can be assumed through the reading of professional literature.

But it is necessary to go beyond the study of children in general. It is necessary to know each child. Numerous suggestions have been given which will help in the acquisition of this intimate knowledge of the individual. A list of approaches would include these: talking with the child, studying his play activities and interests, attempting to interpret his drawings, encouraging him to express his inner feelings in writing, using standardized tests of abilities, knowledges, and personality trends, keeping anecdotal records and cumulative folders, and making contacts with his parents and other teachers. Admittedly, this is a time-consuming process; but the expenditure of time in this pursuit will make unnecessary the outlay of much effort that might prove futile. It is worth mentioning that those teachers who have worked these approaches into an organized pattern of activity do not feel that such activities require too much time.

Responsibility to children includes more than professional and personal information. There is also the necessity for constantly growing knowledge of one's academic specialty. In the elementary grades this knowledge might well take the form of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the constantly swelling store of materials that are designed to help meet individual differences in abilities and interests. A teacher should know what books and what materials will be most appropriate for expanding a pupil's immediate interests and knowledges. Secondary-school

teachers must know their academic specialties so intimately that they can translate the materials into a functional relationship with the contemporary problems of adolescents. The continued effort of the teacher to expand his knowledge of subject matter will have the twofold effect of offering the pupils more wholesome stimulation and of satisfying his own need for growth and development.

As a factor in the teacher's philosophy in the school, responsibility to pupils has a vital significance. It means that the teacher must identify himself with the concepts and ideals that have motivated Americans from the very beginnings of our national existence. It means that these ideals will be translated into action in the techniques and materials that are used in the instructional process. Particularly, it means that the democratic ideal will be practiced in everyday school life. Finally, the teacher's philosophy should embrace a desire for continuous growth of professional knowledge. This involves (1) the study of purposes or goals of instruction and (2) the methods, materials, and situations that can best bring about progress toward the currently defined goals. There is nothing static about this element of philosophy. But it should be patently clear that neither philosophy nor mental hygiene can be effective unless it is characterized by dynamic qualities.

RESPONSIBILITY TO ADMINISTRATORS

Little has been said in this book about the role of school administrators in an effective mental hygiene program. This neglect is not because the part played by administrators is a minor one, but because the book is directed to the classroom teacher. As a matter of fact, administrators can make a significant contribution to pupil mental health if they will apply to their own practice of administrator-teacher relationships many of the suggestions which are given in this book for teacher-pupil relationships. However, here we shall concern ourselves with the teacher's responsibility to administrators.

Loyalty. When one signs a contract to teach, a bond is created between the teacher and the community. The official representative of the community is the administrator. "He [the teacher] should not expect the recognition, respect, and emoluments of his position without giving his allegiance, co-operation, and support in return. He should attend meetings, carry out instructions, keep records, make reports, and honor the constituted authorities of the school."³ Being loyal does not imply being blind to faults and overlooking shortcomings, but requires that, when criticism is necessary, it shall be made through properly constituted chan-

³ Reprinted by permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc., from *Teaching in the Secondary School* by M. L. Goetting, copyright 1942 by Prentice-Hall, Inc., p. 26.

nels. Teachers' meetings and private conferences are the right places for airing honest differences of opinion. Two alternatives remain, both of which are professionally inadequate and both of which threaten mental health values for all concerned. One is to keep stolidly silent and let the feelings of injustice and futility fester within. The other is to let off tensions through general complaining, criticism, and faultfinding to any who will listen—fellow teachers, parents, friends, the public in general, and even to pupils. Neither of these alternatives is likely to solve any difficulties. In fact, both are much more likely to aggravate the situation. Teachers' meetings and conferences, on the other hand, permit the exchange of opinion that will develop a more balanced perspective. With this perspective in mind, the possibility of a constructive solution is enhanced. Just as teachers must give parents credit for having the best interests of their children in mind, so the teacher must give administrators credit for wishing to have the most effective educational system it is possible to achieve.

Cooperation. Cooperation, we are told repeatedly, is a two-way proposition. A friendly, open-minded teacher will stimulate a reciprocal attitude in the administrator. Even though there are *some* autocratic and picayune supervisors, it should be admitted that most of them have arrived at their positions because of demonstrated ability. The actual fact is that where there is a lack of cooperation it *sometimes* grows out of the teacher's own insecurity. It would be well to believe in the competence of the supervisor and to be slow about taking umbrage at his suggestions. Too many teachers feel that suggestions which are actually proffered for improvement of educational practice are intended as attacks on them personally, instead of being directed toward method. The sincere teacher should be looking for improved practices and should try to overlook the personal element, which may be built upon feeling rather than fact.

It will, then, be the part of practical wisdom to give supervisors credit for professional insight when it comes to evaluating the sincerity of their suggestions for improvement. If the supervisor does what teachers have been advised to do—sandwich every bit of criticism between two bits of praise—the atmosphere for improvement is less likely to be clouded. If, as sometimes happens, supervisors are themselves insecure, they may find gratification in carping criticism. In such a case, the teacher (for his own sake) would do well to be objective about the criticism and try to see if his own response can be such as to improve professional relationships. Such a response is an indication of the teacher's own good mental health, since it represents an attempt to understand others. It might be well to remember that in order to get even with a person you have to have been beneath him. Only a mature personality can accept criticism graciously, especially when it is not wholly justified.

Antagonistic or unco-operative attitudes displayed by teachers toward their supervisors are not always caused by supervisory inadequacy. Teachers, like many other persons, tend to be individualistic. They also are tempted to criticize that which they do not understand completely. A supervisor, for many reasons, may need to make decisions or follow procedures that earn for him the disapproval of his faculty because the teachers do not know the reasons for his actions. Moreover, when a teacher has developed the habit of carrying on his teaching activities according to certain patterns that are satisfying to himself, he is likely to be irked if he is asked by his supervisor (especially a new one) to change his accustomed behavior, no matter how desirable the change may be.⁴

A number of sections in the Code of Ethics of the National Education Association have to do with cooperation (see Chapter 17, Art. I, Sec. 4, Art. III, Secs. 4, 9, 10, 12, and 13). It will be well for the teacher to bear in mind that the administrator is a person who himself has problems and difficulties. He is the buffer between the school and the wider community and is himself in need of help and understanding. If this is kept in mind, it will be easier to adopt the friendly attitude that will contribute toward better conditions for the interactive working of cooperation. The gain for pupils, teachers, and administrators will be considerable if the teacher will go halfway toward a meeting of minds.

Participation in Administration. Thirty or forty years ago, the philosophy of school administration viewed principals and superintendents as formulators and executors of policy. A familiar attitude was "As the principal so is the school." With notable exceptions, the administrator was a virtual dictator.

Historically, secondary education has not generally carried all of these [democratic] responsibilities and certainly not for all youth. In the past and in other countries it admittedly has been selective, exclusive, aristocratic, and keyed to less democratic and even authoritarian social settings. . . . We can no longer afford the luxury of a program of youth education which does less than its utmost to defend and promote the goals of American democracy. The last vestiges of authoritarian educational philosophy and of outmoded psychology must be routed out and their places taken by an educational philosophy born of the full application of the principles of democracy to all of life. . . .⁵

Today administration is coming closer to the democratic ideal. Many administrators are enlisting the aid of all school workers in the deter-

⁴ Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow, *Introduction to Education*, New York: American Book Company, 1947, p. 214. By permission of the publisher.

⁵ Will French, J. Dan Hull, B. L. Dodds, *American High School Administration: Policy and Practice*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1951, p. v. By permission of the publisher.

mination of policy. There is an increasing respect for pooled wisdom. A feeling has developed that the school will present a firmer front when teachers have participated in the making of decisions. Since, in many cases, teachers have to execute the policy, it is considered reasonable that they should help to determine the policy.

Participation in administration is just that and nothing more. Some teachers have expressed resentment because they felt that their opinions had been overlooked. It should be remembered that the administrator must consider other views, as well, and that, in the final analysis, it is he who is primarily responsible for the execution of the policy. Some teachers feel that time spent in administrative council is an unwarranted interruption of their time. Many of the matters discussed are not of immediate personal concern. While this is true, there are also many matters that are of direct interest. Unless teachers willingly participate in the discussion of matters that are not of personal concern to them, there is likelihood that the machinery for their discussion of the more intimate topics will not be operative. All too frequently, the teacher who resents encroachments on his time is the one who is quite ready to criticize the policy that does not give attention to his views on matters of salary, sick leave, curriculum, reporting, and the like.

Attitude toward Authority. One of the criteria of psychological maturity often cited in studies of childhood and adolescence has to do with an individual's attitude toward authority. The opinion is justifiable that authority, and respect for it, may be required until the growing person has taken the steps preliminary to socially oriented behavior. One has not the right to flout the authority of the home, of the school, or of society. If demands are unreasonable, attempts should be made to shift to democratic determination. But until the requirements are changed, through being challenged and reconstructed, adherence to them will serve the advantage of all concerned. This is no less true for teachers than it is for children and adolescents. Teachers should, as a matter of psychological maturity, respect properly constituted authority.

Modern education is a highly specialized institution. It is not to be expected that any one individual will have all the answers to all the questions. Individuals who have specialized in particular areas of competence should have their opinions and their authority respected because of their greater knowledge and competence. This does not mean that their dictates must be followed blindly, but it assumes that they have a better "right to their opinion" than would anyone relatively uninitiated in that field. It is a fallacy to believe that everyone has an equal right to hold his opinion. One of the fundamental features of democratic method is that specialization is respected. As others grow in their knowledge and

as better approaches are substituted, the authority of the "top man" is rightfully examined. Abuses of authority occur when the authority of one individual is not challenged by others who are competent. Thinking does not have to stop because one person has achieved a position of prestige.

Teachers who expect pupils to respect authority—and they should expect it—must themselves manifest the same attitude. A mature person is ready and willing to admit the superior wisdom of the specialist in his area. Thus, the visiting teacher, the school nurse, the school custodian, the supervisor, the principal, and the superintendent should be accorded respect in their spheres of authority. Conversely, it is to be hoped that these specialists will yield respect to the teacher in his realm of competence, that is, his intimate knowledge of individual pupils in the classroom. The ideas they have for improvement of methods, materials, and techniques for dealing with individual pupils should be in the form of suggestions. Authority has an important place in school procedures devoted to the improvement of mental health conditions. Authority should be questioned, it should be constantly improved, it should be cooperatively determined; but it should be respected.

When authority is accorded its proper place, when there is participation in administration, when there is cooperation, with loyalty, there is great likelihood that high morale will be established. This kind of morale will increase the satisfaction of all concerned and result in a better school as a whole.

Morale has been defined variously. It is said to be the measure of determination to succeed in the purpose for which the individual is trained, or for which the group exists. It describes the nature and degree of cooperation, confidence, unity of understanding, sympathy, and purpose existing between the individuals comprising the group. It is a sense of solidarity, of strength and purpose, and cause. It depends in some measure on a clearly agreed, common goal ahead, lofty enough to inspire, and tangible enough to be understood by all members of the group. It is affected by zeal, spirit, hope, confidence, and a host of material conditions.⁶

The above quotation mentions several criteria of maturity. Each one of the qualities has some relationship with a mature attitude toward authority. The teacher who is big enough to admit that he does not know it all will have an attitude toward authority that makes zeal, spirit, hope, and confidence obvious features of his personality and his work.

⁶ William H. Burton, *Introduction to Education*, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1934, p. 742. By permission of the publisher, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.

RESPONSIBILITY TO FELLOW TEACHERS

Human Relations and the Classroom Teacher. The general statement that success in any line of work is largely dependent upon one's ability to get along with others is certainly apropos to success in teaching. Teachers need to enjoy not only working with pupils but also working with fellow staff members. A buoyant optimism and an eagerness for one's work are difficult to maintain when interpersonal relations among professional coworkers are strained. Many studies have indicated the significance of cordial relations between teacher and teacher. Yet a typical study indicates that, among the top mental health hazards for teachers, several might be included under "deficiencies in adult human relations." W. C. Kvaraceus, reporting a study made in a mental hygiene course at the University of Illinois, listed the hazards that were mentioned by thirty or more teachers out of a group of sixty-seven. "Conflicting personalities among teachers" and "jealousies among school personnel" ranked third and fourth on the list (heavy teacher load and overcrowded classrooms were in first and second places).⁷ Besides these, the total list of twenty-seven items mentioned thirty or more times (out of sixty-seven) included the following situations that bear on adult human relations: "teachers in conflict with administrative policy," "administrator-teacher personality conflicts," "criticism by superiors," "teacher criticized in front of pupils," "teacher cliques exclude new teachers," "lack of cooperative attitude on part of some school personnel," and "lack of understanding among personnel of exact responsibilities of each staff member." Thus one-third of the hazards to teacher mental health are the outcome of ineptitude in getting along with others.

Before any generalizations are made as to how teacher-teacher relations might be improved, it must be admitted that "others" have a part to play in the reduction of the hazards. In spite of the best efforts to secure mature and healthy personalities as teachers, there are some of these "others" with whom it is exceedingly difficult to establish enjoyable relations. Better screening and selection of prospective teachers will reduce this difficulty. In the meantime, we shall be concerned with attitudes and techniques which you, as one of the teaching corps, can evaluate and use for the improvement of conditions.

Your Role in Cooperation. As has been mentioned earlier, cooperation is a two-way matter. Each teacher should do what he can, in view of personal limitations, to invite cooperation from others. It might be well to introduce specific recommendations with a concept of cooperation—an activity in which individuals *voluntarily* participate, carrying it for-

⁷ W. C. Kvaraceus, "Mental Health Hazards Facing Teachers," *Phi Delta Kappan*, Vol. 32 (April, 1951), p. 349.

ward with consideration of the roles belonging to others. This concept may be put into operation by some such procedures as are suggested in the following paragraphs.

1. Stress the "we" idea. When seeking cooperation, give the impression that the other person has a contribution to make. Try to make him realize that it is a joint undertaking. If he can be made to feel that he is working *with* rather than *for*, he will participate more effectively. Should you be the one who is being asked to cooperate, think the activity through so that you comprehend your particular role. Even though your contribution may not be effusively acknowledged, you can have the inner satisfaction of knowing that you have helped. When another teacher asks to be allowed to use the objective-type questions you have so laboriously formulated, give them gladly in the interests of more effective evaluation for children, rather than in the resentful attitude that the other teacher "certainly is lazy."

2. Seek help. This suggestion may seem to conflict with the one above, but it works. One hears that "The way to make a friend is to get him to help you." This, of course, is not all there is to it, but it does count. It gives almost anyone an expansive feeling to be able to help another. For example, if you have a pupil whom you do not know how to handle and you ask someone else, "What would you do?" this indicates that you respect the other's judgment. Asking for physical assistance gives the impression that you respect the skill of the other. This should not be just acting. There should be behind it a conviction that the other can be of genuine assistance. And he can be, since no one of us is omniscient or omnipotent.

3. Be helpful. It is so obvious as to be hardly worth mentioning that if we wish cooperation we should be cooperative. A request for help might be looked upon as an imposition on time and energy; but it can also be considered an evidence of the other's respect for your ability or knowledge. If you must refuse, let the reason be a truly valid one rather than an elaborate rationalization. After this test is applied, the requested help will very likely be given.

4. Listen attentively. A man who took a beautiful and famous woman to dinner, one night, was highly complimented by her gracious behavior. After briefly glancing around the dining room to see who was there, she gave her entire attention to him for the rest of the time. By looking at him and listening to him she enhanced his feeling of worth. Many of us have been resentful toward teachers who, while ostensibly talking to us, continued to mark papers, read letters, or give directions to others. Such treatment makes us feel that the person who gives it has no real concern with our presence. The inference we may draw is that we, in our turn, should listen attentively to the advice we have requested—or for that

matter, advice which we have not requested but which, nevertheless, might contain wisdom.

5. Be courteous. The desirability of being courteous is suggested in the foregoing. "Courtesy and good manners integrated in habitual patterns of behavior ring true and are serviceable in smoothing and facilitating social contact. This is equally valid for both sexes. Discourteous and ill-mannered ways of acting are handicaps which make social adjustment inferior and difficult."⁸ Courtesy begins with such simple matters as calling people by name, saying "Please" and "Thank you," and in general respecting the individuality of the other. But perhaps the strongest reason for advising courtesy is not because of the effect that it has on others but because assuming the manners of politeness will tend to cultivate the spirit of respect for others.

6. Share an emergency. It seems evident that one of the ways to get bountiful aid and eager assistance is to encounter some tragedy. A flood, a fire, famine, or widespread disease brings forth a hearty response of helpfulness from the more fortunate. Some of the personal tragedies of pupils awaken full and genuine expressions of humane interest. Hence, when a problem is encountered by the teacher, it affords a good opportunity for establishing cooperative endeavor with other teachers. They may have some contribution to make that will not only result in a more advantageous solution of the problem but give them a chance to show their worth. The problem need not be one involving death or serious illness, but even some comparatively minor thing (major, however, to the individual concerned) that interferes with the pupil's happiness. Not being on the ball team, failing to make the school orchestra, or heartbreak over not having clothes like the other kids are kinds of emergencies that cannot always be met by routine procedures.

7. Reveal purposes. Numerous references have been made to the importance of revealing goals to pupils. Clarity of goals is no less important when it involves the gaining or getting of cooperation. If the principal wants a special report in a hurry, he would do well to tell the teacher why it is so important. If the teacher wants help from others, he should be willing to explain in detail—and patiently—the entire setting and its significance. The value of this was realized by military leaders in World War II, and the outcome was a studied attempt to reveal to noncommissioned personnel just what the significance of their job was. Much of the lack of cooperation between teachers and administrators and between teachers and other teachers is that each has such a superficial understanding of the other's responsibility that his work is deemed insignificant.

⁸ Daniel Starch, Hazel M. Stanton, and Wilhelmine Koerth, *Controlling Human Behavior*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1936, p. 263. By permission of the publisher.

The belief that the other fellow's job is easy or unimportant is an all-too-frequent symptom of a lack of understanding of purposes that could be clarified by a few patient words.

Animosities and Jealousies. Even superficial observation of the typical school staff brings to light evidences of animosities and jealousies between staff members. Little asides, direct criticisms, and innuendoes indicate a lack of harmonious adjustment. But these defects become increasingly evident during intimate personal conversations with individuals. Mentally healthy teachers will seek to reduce such evidences.

Of two really important reasons why we cannot afford to indulge in jealousy, animosity, and suspicion, the first is that the welfare of the school as a whole is diminished by such behaviors and attitudes. These things are not just personal, they have a direct bearing upon maintaining a healthy environment for children. The second reason for concern—from the personal viewpoint, a more compelling reason—is that the individual cannot emotionally pay the price involved. The cumulative effect of a negative emotion, even though it be so relatively mild as petty jealousy, is the same as that of intense fear or rage. The physiological products of prolonged negative emotion act upon the individual as a poison. One may be successful in hurting another's feelings through some snobbish remark or insult, but the giver of the hurt also suffers injury. Hating hurts the hater. Jealousy hurts the one who is jealous by keeping him from emphasizing and practicing his own positive attributes and abilities.

Teachers must, as should others, beware of the rationalization inherent in the statement, "I'm telling you this for your own good." The words, translated into truth, would say, "I'm telling you this because of the personal satisfaction I get out of making you appear inferior to me." We must, in short, avoid expressing animosity and similar negative emotions through personal criticism. Two practical bits of wisdom from the Bible might serve to give a more constructive orientation to the temptation to criticize: "Let him who is without sin be the first to cast a stone" and "A soft answer turneth away wrath." The tendency to criticize others can also be weakened by studying the implications of the mental hygiene statement: He who describes the personality of another is in reality revealing himself. The import of this assertion is more readily appreciated if we remember the factors of personality projection involved in creative art work, in free writing, and in children's play which were discussed in earlier chapters. In short, what is seen in others is conditioned by one's own personality make-up.

The emotional reactions involved in petty criticism, in personal animosities, and the immaturity of jealousy are pertinently evaluated in the following statement:

Such . . . emotional reactions gnaw like a cancerous growth upon one's energy and undermine his capacity for effective and happy social adjustment. Imagine how much happier, cooperative and effective we should be if we were willing to cast out our petty interprofessional jealousies which warp our perspective and cause us to give lip service to cooperation, but without operation.⁹

It is obvious that these negative emotions are not only a threat to professional dignity but also a hazard to personal mental health.

The Old Teacher Meets the New One. A big step in the improvement of teacher-teacher relationships would be for each to make a studied effort to understand the problems of the other. The teacher who has previously taught in the community should try to realize that a new teacher may have some very valuable ideas. Perhaps some of the school customs—pupil discipline, classroom methods, and the like—would benefit by some overhauling. Even the teacher who has had no experience in any school system may have some ideas that are worthy of trial. Suggestions such as "This is the way we do it here" should be withheld until the new teachers have asked for help—and they will, provided that they do not feel they *must*, in spite of convictions to the contrary, carry out the advice. A similar open-mindedness might well characterize social relationships. Invite the new teacher into established activities. This will not only be helpful to the newcomer but serve to give the "old-timer" an opportunity for personality expansion and the formation of new friendships.

Often the newcomer, by his aloofness, tends to discourage the proffering of friendship. Those brilliant ideas garnered from college professors may be no more valid than the "traditional" approaches worked out by teachers through years of direct contact with pupils. Hence, any insinuation as to "old fogies" should be studiously avoided. The beginning teacher should beware of the temptation to criticize the "outmoded" methods of others, which in terms of their particular personality attributes are highly successful. Yet these same techniques may not be appropriate for the beginner.

A cordial relationship between the new teacher and the holdover will be facilitated by the same factors that have been stressed in teacher-pupil relationships; *i.e.*, recognition of the uniqueness of personality, respect for varied backgrounds, a genuine friendliness based on maturity of personality, and a faith in the integrity of the purpose of the other. If others do not show these traits, recriminations will do no good. The healthful orientation will be to ask oneself, "What problems in this person's life cause him to manifest these symptoms?"

⁹ Frank E. Howard and Frederick L. Patry, *Mental Health*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1935, p. 185. By permission of the publisher.

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY

Respect for the Mores of the Community. There are, to judge from the reports of teachers and from periodic published materials, communities in which unreasonable demands are made on the teacher. But for the most part the demands made are merely that teachers act as gentlemen and ladies. Some communities, however, differ from the typical to a marked degree. Here, for instance, is a Quaker neighborhood, settled years ago by Quakers and today largely inhabited by Quakers. There are no beer parlors within the town limits and relatively few of the adults smoke. None of the teachers in a three-school system smokes. It does not seem unreasonable that the adults in such a community should wish new teachers to subscribe to the predominant behavior. The feeling that sentiment against smoking is unreasonable might well be countered by a feeling on the part of those in the town that a new teacher has no right to attempt to impose his behaviors on those who think differently. For such reasons, the teacher is advised to learn about the mores of the community before accepting a position in the school system. If he or she cannot graciously bow to the prevailing mood, a position should be sought elsewhere.

Here is another community in which dress is conventionalized to conform to the religious orientation. While the teachers are not expected to clothe themselves in the conventional garb, they should not deliberately adopt extremes in dress just to show how narrow the inhabitants are. In this same community it will be necessary to guard against the tendency to indoctrinate the youngsters into scientific biases. While, to be sure, the facts of science should be objectively presented, it is wrong to attack the religious tenets directly. The insecurity which might be generated in the pupils would probably be harmful, in terms of mental health. This does not mean that pupils' questions should be avoided, but it cautions that our answers to the questions should be dispassionate, that the facts should be presented without introducing the idea that the student is compelled to believe them. The slow process of objective education should be trusted, without any insistence that marked change is immediately necessary. The practical use of these suggestions calls for the application of that quality so frequently mentioned in mental hygiene—balance. It requires also patience, respect for others, and faith in the educability of all.

Friendly respect for others is, of course, basic to the establishment of sound community relations. Such relations are desirable in all citizens, but have a special importance for teachers. Because communities recognize the powerful influence of teachers on young people, they tend to be particularly concerned with the character of their views and general behavior. Strains

are bound to arise when local standards differ—as they often do—from those to which a given teacher has been accustomed. Evidently, give and take is the right way to relieve these strains—but this requires mutual understanding based on genuine acquaintance. Teachers “from the outside” who keep aloof from the life of the community are likely to be driven in one of two directions, neither of them satisfactory. A merely expedient meeting of local demands, a dishonest pretending to locally esteemed “virtues,” is destructive of personal integrity, the essential importance of which has been emphasized in this book [*Teachers for Our Times*]. On the other hand, for a teacher to insist uncompromisingly on the right “to be himself”—that is, the “self” he was when he arrived and which he assumes to be beyond improvement—is equally to court disaster. It is important, then, that teachers should know how to establish friendly relations with the people of the community in which they work, and be able and willing to adapt their behavior courteously to local mores and folkways. They will then be likely to be accorded that reciprocal respect which will enable them to preserve and strengthen their essential integrity.¹⁰

The viewpoint which is being recommended here is simply another application of the view that is recommended for dealing with pupils. Individuality must be respected. We must believe in the sincerity of motives of the other. We should realize that different interpretations of the same basic set of facts are possible. “It is necessary to keep in mind another important factor in progress; namely, that of compromise. Compromise is an essential technique of the democratic process. Sometimes to achieve part of a program is more important than to strive for all and gain none.”¹¹ There is no easy solution to the problem of community mores, but certainly resentment and suspicion are not good for the profession, for the community, or for the teacher’s personal mental health.

Acquaintance with the Community. The familiar phrase, introduced earlier with respect to pupils, “To know is to understand,” is pertinent to effective work in the community’s schools. A thorough and growing knowledge of the community is basic to the entire viewpoint presented in this volume. Without this knowledge, one cannot work effectively with individual pupils, their unique backgrounds and problems. Familiarity with the community conditions the teacher’s effectiveness and, consequently, his own satisfaction derived from his work.

As the teacher investigates the character of the community and works to improve it, she never loses sight of the young children for whom she is primarily responsible. In what kind of neighborhood does each child live?

¹⁰ Commission on Teacher Education, *Teachers for Our Times*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1944, p. 158. By permission of the publisher.

¹¹ Reprinted by permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc., from *Principles of Secondary Education* by Nelson L. Bossing, copyright 1949 by Prentice-Hall, Inc., pp. 432-433.

What sort of house do his parents provide? Has he brothers and sisters? Where and with whom does he play? What do his parents do? Where do they work? What do they do for recreation? Where do they shop? What language is spoken at home? To what kinds of rules is he accustomed at home; at play; on the street? Is the family new or well established in the neighborhood? Does the family take part in community activities; if so, in what are members most active? These *and many other questions* the teacher will ultimately answer if she is to plan wisely the experience for the children.¹²

The importance of knowing the community is not a novel idea in education, although recent years have seen an increasing stress on its importance. As we think through our objectives in education and study the implementation of the principles of democracy, the significance of the community becomes more evident. If we would understand the child's attitude toward work, toward discipline, toward cooperative endeavor, and toward morality, we must know his cultural background. If we would understand the adolescent's attitude toward liquor, sex, and occupation, we must know his cultural background.

Understanding the life of the community in which the child lives is essential not only as a means of interpreting the child's needs, but as a basis for the establishment of community and school relationships, and the organization of community-centered units of study. The investigation of the community backgrounds of children should result in an awareness of the numerous agencies which influence children's growth for good or ill, and of the community resources which the school may utilize.

In order to understand fully the school's responsibility in guiding children's learning, the teacher must be aware of the numerous, often contradictory, forces which play upon the social judgments, the sense of human values, and the personal goals of children and youth.¹³

It is one thing to say that the teacher should be acquainted with the community and quite another to prescribe how this acquaintance should be developed. Some suggestions as to areas which might be visited by the teacher are contained in the following quotation:

Knowing the available resources of specific communities for the education of children is probably of equal importance with a knowledge of the resources found in schoolbooks. Not only such familiar centers as museums, libraries, art exhibits, conservatories, and zoological gardens, but also indus-

¹² A Committee of the California School Supervisors Association, Helen Heffernan (ed.), *Guiding the Young Child*, Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1951, p. 37. (Italics not in original.) By permission of the publisher.

¹³ George E. Axtelle and William W. Wattenberg (eds.), *Teachers for Democracy*, Fourth Yearbook of John Dewey Society, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1940, p. 286. By permission of the publisher.

trial centers, engineering achievements, social centers, housing projects, slums, scientific collections, recreation centers, clinics, newspaper plants, radio stations, courts, legislative chambers, and the offices of government, offer opportunities for the broadening of pupils' experiences and the stimulation of vital thinking concerning the problems of society. The more limited opportunities in rural areas make the study of such resources as are available even more essential.¹⁴

There are several approaches to obtaining knowledge of a community. One is to make a personal visit. Some teachers have done this as their recreational hobby, rather than as an extension of professional service. Another is to make the original study with the pupils. Still another is to undertake the study as a group teacher enterprise under the guise of education in-service. A group of rural teachers undertook such a study in a workshop and found that the following areas contained valuable educational material for pupils: a large nut orchard, a dairy, a turkey farm, a farmers' cooperative canning plant, a Catholic monastery, a local garage, and other enterprises not included in the above quotation. As a result of their study, they compiled a mimeographed booklet listing the names of people who could be contacted to arrange a visit, exact descriptions as to the roads to be taken, and a brief description of some of the things that could be seen. The booklet was distributed and its users were encouraged to make additions and submit them to a continuing chairman, who periodically reissued the booklet with suggested revisions. The most gratifying outcome of the workshop was, however, the assertion of the teachers that they enjoyed their teaching more because they were better acquainted with their community.

Interpreting the School. Teachers become aware of the need for interpreting the school when there is some acute issue at stake. When a bond issue is to be floated which would mean an increase in salary, when the system of pupil evaluation is to be changed, or when additional pupil services are to be added, there is a sporadic effort to portray the school in its best light. But all too often, the necessity for continuous interpretation of the school is left to the administration. The sentiment, "My job is to teach," all too often prevails.

Actually, responsibility for interpreting the school cannot be avoided. Whether the teacher wishes to admit it or not, he is interpreting the school. Through the life he leads, the attitudes he expresses, the organizations to which he belongs, he is viewed by school patrons as a representative of the school. Nor can interpretation of the school be avoided, since pupils go home and report on the school as it is seen through their particular teachers. Thus, in a very real sense, those things which are

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 269-270. By permission of the publisher.

done to implement the objectives of mental hygiene in the classroom are avenues of interpretation. Finally, responsibility for interpreting the school cannot be avoided because of its prime necessity. School patrons have all had *some* experience with the school and they, justifiably or unjustifiably, have some very definite notions about the teachers, the methods, and the materials to which their own children should be exposed. Each person feels that his experience makes him in some way an expert in education. However, this should not blind us to the fact that parents have good intentions. They want, and they deserve, explanations. Informed parents will not oppose changes, costs, or reasonable personal assistance intended for the welfare of their children. They, as has been emphasized with respect to teaching young people, deserve to have the objectives clarified. This demands more than the activity involved in periodic drives or campaigns. It is a matter requiring continuous attention and is just as deserving of studied approaches as are instructional techniques or curricular changes. It is too big a job for the administrators alone.

There are many ways in which the teacher can take his part in school interpretation. One, previously mentioned, is by the life he leads. The friendliness he manifests in meeting patrons provides a view of "the school." Participation in civic organizations gives an indication that he is interested in the welfare of the community at large. The ramifications and magnitude of this responsibility are incisively expressed in the following words:

The role here assigned to organized education in the rising battle for democracy [and we might well say, mental health] in America requires a teacher of large intellectual and moral stature—a teacher who is more than a technician, more than a skillful practitioner of the art of pedagogy. He should indeed be a thorough master of his craft; but he should also know to what larger ends his craftsmanship is directed. He should be a scholar who has command of the knowledge of his specialty, a citizen who takes a responsible part in the life of the community, a democrat who identifies himself with the interests and fortunes of the many, a patriot who is deeply concerned over the future of his country and his people, a friend of mankind who cherishes the values of world peace and human brotherhood, a poet who feels the tragedy, the pathos, the glorious hopes of the time, a wise counselor of the young who knows the conditions and problems of living in the present confused and challenging epoch. He should also be an active member of his profession, ready to devote time and energy to the general advancement of the cause of public education and enlightenment.

This is not to say that the schools and colleges of the country have not had teachers of this type. They have had many of them, but they need many more. . . . Anything that enlarges the opportunities and responsibilities of the calling will inevitably enlarge the intellectual and moral stature

of the individual teacher. For such opportunities and responsibilities the members of the profession should struggle without ceasing. And in this struggle they should have the support of all citizens who would have the schools serve the cause of American democracy more effectively.¹⁵

If this seems like a large order, we should remember that the task of education is a large order, too. Perhaps no one teacher can achieve the standards indicated. Each one is capable of attempting to come closer to the goal than he now is. This attempt will work for the benefit of both the pupil and the school patron. However, the greatest advantage will accrue to the teacher. The effort to become a teacher of "large intellectual and moral stature" will serve to get one out of the hampering confines of narrow self-concern. It will offer specific and tangible goals toward which to direct one's own growth. It will serve to identify one more closely with the great enterprise of education—helping children to attain more nearly their maximum potential for healthy productive living.

The behavior of pupils is another medium by which schools are interpreted. People gain impressions about the schools not only from what youngsters say about their teachers but from the way the pupils reflect in their actions the influence of teachers. No experienced teacher who is worthy of being identified as a teacher has failed to find numerous occasions on which he was quite willing to say, "That is one of my pupils." We have seen times—at a school play production, in sportsmanlike conduct at an athletic contest, upon school visiting days—when we were quite proud to say, "Those are youngsters from my school."

Finally, schools are interpreted by direct intent. Participation in parent-teacher organizations provides many opportunities for telling what the ideals and purposes of education are. Teachers are frequently invited to speak before civic and social groups on various phases of schoolwork. Visitation of the pupil's home is a means of interpretation that is highly recommended by administrators and commended by those teachers who have given it serious trial. School visiting days, or evenings, are sometimes regarded by teachers as interruptions in their work or impositions on their time. They present, however, one of the very effective means of interpreting the school. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the polite greeting of school patrons can lead to serious conversations that serve to portray the school. This does not mean that a lecture should be precipitated as an answer to a greeting. It is simply one way of showing a willingness to discuss "our" schools.

¹⁵ George S. Counts, *The Prospects of American Democracy*, New York: The John Day Company, 1938, pp. 346-347. By permission of the publisher.

SUMMARY

The teacher's philosophy intimately affects his mental health. His mental health, in turn, affects the welfare of all those with whom he is in contact. Hence, concern about one's philosophy is important from professional, social, and personal viewpoints. While it is futile to hope that a prescriptive philosophy will be acceptable to all, it does seem that a contemplation of some of the areas which should be included in one's philosophy as it functions in the school deserves consideration.

The aspect of one's professional philosophy that touches on the welfare of pupils is of prime importance. Teachers must share America's long-evidenced faith in the ability of the school to bring forth maximum development of children and youth. This is particularly important in a democracy, where the welfare of one conditions the welfare of all. In order to put this faith into practice, it is necessary to respect human differences, both in achievement and in capacity for achievement. Further, this faith should extend beyond the individual to a respect for group intelligence. To a very large extent, this involves no startlingly new knowledge about children, but a plan for using what we currently know (though knowledge will go on evolving).

One's professional philosophy must include a consideration of responsibility to administrators. Loyalty and cooperation are fundamental. If the personality of the administrator is such as to inhibit such an attitude, the teacher should study to find out what responsibility he may have in causing such unfavorable conditions. For the most part, however, it is safe to assume that the administrators are motivated by high ideals and serious professional purposes. When the opportunity is presented, teachers may well be willing to participate in administration, though it is necessary to bear in mind that, in the final analysis, the administrator is the executor of policy. Throughout, the teacher must develop an objective attitude toward authority. Democracy implies the delegation of responsibility according to special aptitudes and training.

Responsibility to one's fellow workers should be considered. Cooperation is a two-way concern, and the individual should be sure that his attitude is such as to invite cooperation. Too often the neglect of courtesy and sharing inhibits cooperative endeavor. Animosities and jealousies are evidences of emotional immaturity to be studiously avoided by leaders of young people, not for the sake of the pupils alone, but also for their own welfare and that of their coworkers. Both the old and the new teacher each might well give thought to ways by which the other may be made more comfortable and secure in his attempt to cooperate.

The teacher's philosophy should consider community relations. This should include a respect for the established mores of the community. If

these seem to need changing, the different backgrounds of the "unenlightened" should be acknowledged and respected. One's responsibility to children involves a responsibility for knowing the community in which they live and will—many of them—continue to live. Community relations involve attention to interpreting the school and educating the community—*on a continuous basis*. Faith in the educability of children should be extended to a faith in the educability of school patrons.

These items which are components of the teacher's philosophy call for an individual of large stature. But, for both professional and personal reasons, they are ideals worth working to attain. They offer stimulating goals.

While there has actually been no final, definite, and wholly accepted description of the kind of adult we need, there are certain characteristics the desirability of which is pretty generally agreed upon. Among such desirable traits, the following six would certainly be included.

1. Personal happiness and satisfaction. Desires and needs must be so regulated that aspiration and achievement maintain some reasonable balance.
2. Social competence and maturity. The adult must have some recognition of himself as a part of a social group and must have the behavior skills necessary for living as a member of the group.
3. Control of emotions and drives. The basic physiological needs of the organism must be inhibited and expressed, with proper balance between personal desire and cultural limitation.
4. Occupational and recreational skills. These must be acquired to the degree necessary for adequate functioning in economic and social adjustments.
5. Stability and constancy of purpose and action, not to the point of stagnation, but sufficient to maintain the individual's status as a member of the group.
6. Adequacy and security. The adult must feel satisfaction both in "who he is" and in "what he is." These are Plant's terms and they refer to the individual's feeling that he is acceptable both because of his belonging to a group and because of his special skills and knowledge.¹⁶

Each of the above points can be intimately related to the teacher's philosophy in the school. Personal happiness and satisfaction result from doing one's total job as well as he can. Social competence and maturity may be manifested in cooperative endeavor. Control of emotions and drives will reduce animosities and jealousies and stimulate respect for others. Occupational and recreational skills involve the obligation of being a contributing factor in the total life of the community. Stability and constancy of purpose and actions imply devotion to continual im-

¹⁶ C. M. Louttit, "The School as a Mental Hygiene Factor," *Mental Hygiene*, Vol. 31 (January, 1947), p. 51. By permission of the publisher.

provement of one's work. Adequacy and security are fostered by a philosophy that makes teachers significant in one of the greatest enterprises of a democracy.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. Do you feel that the item "faith in children" has a justifiable place in the teacher's philosophy? Why or why not?
2. Describe to your classmates some examples in which children have given evidence of group wisdom.
3. Using either past or present experience, try to analyze the reasons why a particular administrator has made loyalty and cooperation difficult. What could be done by the teacher to help change the situation?
4. Explain your own attitude toward teacher participation in the development of administrative policy.
5. Describe an instance in which a teacher has not manifested a mature attitude toward authority. What were the effects upon the teacher?
6. Make some additional suggestions, beyond those listed in the chapter, for bringing about better cooperation between teachers.
7. Read and report on some of the practices used for orienting new teachers into the school system.
8. Suggest some weaknesses involved in the section dealing with "respect for the mores of the community."
9. Which area of school interpretation by teachers do you feel is most important? Which is of least importance?
10. What other areas for educating the community do you feel should be incorporated into the teacher's philosophy?
11. Suggest some parallels between Louttit's goals for teachers and the teacher's philosophy.
12. What areas of the teacher's philosophy in school do you feel have been neglected in this chapter?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

COOK, LLOYD A., and ELAINE F. COOK, *A Sociological Approach to Education*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1950. 512 pp.

This book is a revision of a tested book on the role of the teacher and the school in the community. Emphasis is on the solution of school-community problems through cooperative study. The last section is particularly apropos to this chapter, *i.e.*, it deals with the teacher's responsibility in community leadership.

HYDE, WILLIAM DEWITT, *The Teacher's Philosophy in and out of School*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1910. 88 pp.

An old but stimulating discussion of down-to-earth factors in the teacher's philosophy. The author relates the operational philosophy of the teacher to a lucid discussion of the following viewpoints: Epicurean, Stoic, Platonic, Aristo-

telian, and Christian. Each of these viewpoints throws into clear perspective some specific responsibility and function of the teacher.

JAMES, WILLIAM, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1899 (new ed., 1939). 238 pp.

As the title suggests, reading this book is like having a conversation with the philosopher and teacher, William James. It is said of James that he wrote psychology like a novel. The result is an interesting and decidedly practical presentation of the role of teachers and the ideals they might well hold.

TERHUNE, WILLIAM B. (ed.), and others, *Living Wisely and Well*, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1949. 95 pp.

Living Wisely and Well would be pertinent supplementary reading for several chapters in this book. It is not directed especially to teachers. It deals specifically with mental hygiene in childhood, adult life, and later maturity. The role of one's work, the importance of purpose, and the significance of improving human relations are cogently and concisely discussed.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

American Teacher, March of Time, 369 Lexington Ave., New York 17. (20 min, BW, sd.)

The advantages and disadvantages of progressive education are indicated. It shows that responsibility for education is a community undertaking that must be seriously appraised if our youth are to receive maximum benefits.

Pop Rings the Bell, National School Service Institute, Shop 307, Palmer House, Chicago, Ill. (23 min, BW, sd.)

Shows how technological improvements demand changes in school practice. Students are portrayed in various situations—classroom, shop, and laboratory.

The School, United World Films, 1445 Park Ave., New York 29. (21 min, BW, sd.)

One day's activities in an elementary school. Includes the janitor's opening the school, children on their way to school, a first grade studying and playing, and a P.T.A. meeting in the evening.

Teachers' Crisis, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42d St., New York 36. (17 min, BW, sd.)

A survey of the critical shortage of teachers in the United States caused by low salaries, heavy teaching loads, and the like. Dangers to the country are indicated.

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THE TEACHER'S PHILOSOPHY— ADULT MENTAL HEALTH

THE CORRECT philosophy for any person may be regarded from various viewpoints. Analysis of the major viewpoints in philosophy—pragmatism, idealism, realism, Stoicism, Platonism, Epicureanism, and others—indicates that there are attractive elements in each. In some cases, what is particularly emphasized in one is not contested by another but is merely considered a point of minor emphasis. Often, of course, there are opposing viewpoints regarding what is good. These considerations make difficult the project of outlining the factors that should go into the teacher's philosophy, or into anyone's philosophy; but there are some points that should unquestionably *be examined* as each individual tries to decide what things are most worth while in his own life. This chapter is not intended as a prescription for an adult's—the teacher's—philosophy; rather, it is a proposal of items that seem to merit serious evaluation as the teacher attempts to bring his total functioning to a higher level.

EXERCISING THE FACETS OF PERSONALITY

A balanced philosophy should in some way recognize the need for exercising the various facets of personality. For the sake of convenience it will be assumed that there are four major phases of personality that should be considered in evolving a point of view that will aid the teacher in maintaining good mental health. They are the physical, the mental, the emotional, and the spiritual.

Recognizing the Physical Aspect of Personality. The importance of physical well-being is recognized in all statements of the objectives of education. Teachers emphasize to their pupils the significance of keeping in good health, from the first grade on through high school. But all too frequently, they seem not to recognize the importance of physical-health precautions in their own lives. Apparently the lessons they teach are so obvious that too little emphasis is put upon them in practice. For example, teachers sometimes neglect to get a sufficient amount of sleep, they hurry their meals, they often pay too little attention to having a balanced diet,

and—perhaps, worst of all—they become so engrossed in the round of their daily activities that they neglect to take appropriate physical exercise. All these need to be taken into account in formulating a philosophy of living that will be conducive to a confident and energetic attack on the problems of teaching. The teacher owes to his pupils the responsibility of keeping himself in the best physical health possible—to say nothing of the responsibility which he owes to himself.

No blanket prescription can be made regarding the proper amount of sleep for a particular individual. Some adults get along admirably with six or fewer hours of sleep, while others need as much as nine hours. Each person should study his own needs and see to it that the working schedule (including teaching, preparation, recreation, and pursuance of personal preferences) provides for an amount of sleep that will fill his needs. A pragmatic test is to study how one feels on arising. If sleep is fitful in the early morning hours, it might be well to try allowing for fewer hours of sleep. It is more likely that the majority hate to get up and have difficulty in awakening. These people should experiment by going to bed earlier. Moreover, experiments indicate that regularity of sleep habits is important; hence, one should weigh carefully the temptations to interrupt the regular sleeping schedule.

Serious attention should be given to eating leisurely meals, in enjoyable physical surroundings and in good company. Too frequently the press of hall duty, responsibility for supervision of the school cafeteria, and the need to make a few minutes' more preparation for a "one o'clock class" may cause teachers to eat hurriedly. Sometimes this is unavoidable, but planning may help. If teachers have noon duties they might request the administration to allow for free time before or after the school lunch hour, they might work shifts with other teachers or arrange class schedules so that another teacher might double up in art, physical education, or shop activity—thus allowing one teacher free time for leisurely eating. Even if this cannot be controlled during the noon meal, something can be done with regard to the morning and evening meals, merely by recognizing the relative importance of leisurely eating and some of the temptations which interfere, such as forty more winks of sleep or rushing off to an evening class or an early movie.

Many opinions express the belief that exercise is essential to good health and mental and bodily vigor. When it comes to proving that exercise is a *sine qua non* of health, conclusive evidence is lacking. People who exercise regularly show no distinct superiority in resistance to disease, longevity, and vigor on the job over those whose only exercise is walking from the house to the garage. One thing can safely be said in favor of moderate exercise, taken with some degree of regularity: those who take such exercise report that they *feel better* when they exercise regularly,

without carrying the activity to the point of its making them tired. Many report that such discomforts as little neck aches, lack of appetite, and headaches, occurring on a day replete with tensions, are quickly banished by the right physical exercise.

Regular exercise should be paralleled by regular periods of rest and relaxation. Ideally, it is to be hoped that such periods will be arranged for in the teacher's schedule. Many schools being built today have attractive teachers' lounges, where a teacher may be safe from the intrusion of pupils with problems. There is little reason to believe that while pupils need rest and recreation periods interspersed through their work, teachers are capable of carrying responsibilities continuously through the day—including what should be periods of rest and recreation. If the ideal situation does not exist, it becomes all the more important for teachers to plan a rest and recreation time for themselves outside school hours. Without denying that some paper work has to be done and that preparation for the school day should be made, it must be emphatically asserted that the teacher owes it to himself and to his pupils to enjoy—through rest and recreation—his afternoons and evenings.

These physical-health measures are admittedly elementary. Perhaps that is why they are too often ignored. One's philosophy should help him to evaluate the comparative importance of whatever tends to interfere with the fulfillment of these physical-health requirements.

Another factor in the maintenance of good physical health is attention to periodic health examinations and prompt help for minor ailments. The excuse generally given for neglecting these is that they represent another drain on an already thin financial supply. It is to be hoped that the time will soon arrive when medical benefits will be more readily available to teachers generally; but in the meantime it is important, for long-run physical health, that prompt care of minor ailments should be considered a fundamental routine matter. One of the more important phases of the treatment of both physical and mental ailments is early identification and early treatment. This precaution is just as important for the schoolteacher as it is for his pupils. The wisdom of such a course is shown by the generally accepted verdict that it is actually cheaper, in the long run, to pay for regular examinations and the treatment of minor ailments than it is to pay the costs of the more serious illnesses that are—at least, to some extent—avoidable.

W. S. Cornell, using a study of five thousand teachers, reported the following unfavorable health practices: (1) insufficient drinking water, (2) insufficient exercise, (3) insufficient fresh air, (4) habitual use of patent medicines, (5) excess of carbohydrates in the diet, (6) overuse of tobacco, (7) insufficient or interrupted sleep, (8) culpable conditions of

work, (9) inadequate recreation, and (10) rapid eating.¹ This might well serve the teacher as a check list for his own physical-health habits.

Hobbies, which will sometimes also afford opportunities for the exercise of mental and emotional aspects of personality, can be of considerable benefit to one's physical health. The initial syllable, "re," in recreation should be given attention. Recreation is more than mere rest; it stands for the re-creation of the individual through the exercise of interests and potentialities which are given too little recognition in one's work. Thus, recreation, to be maximally effective, should contrast with the usual workaday activities. There need be no specific prescription as to what hobbies teachers should adopt. Whatever these may be, because they combine the mental, physical, and emotional exercise of personality, they will offer a way of enriching life in all its manifestations. George Lawton, though primarily concerned with older people in the following statement, offers a generalization which is apropos for us all.

Certain things need to be said to people in their thirties and forties. They need to know that life offers fulfillment at every stage, that self-realization and pleasure are possible in old age, that the imagination is always there for us to use.

It is to make you try out your imagination, if you are not already doing so, that I am here this afternoon. Your imagination is good. Trust it; enjoy it.

I think it is a big mistake to present any particular art or craft as the one most desirable for people. There are hundreds and hundreds of arts and crafts, and what you will like, I won't, and vice versa. One man's art is another man's poison. That is why the problem of testing for artistic aptitudes, discovering latent interests, is so important. Painting is a most valuable and respectable art, and yet a woman of fifty may prefer to make original dresses for dolls. An older man may wish to do needle point. Another older woman may wish to build a miniature theater. A man may want to make plastic jewelry. . . .

What I have to say will be most easily received by those people for whom growth and development need never end, who can explore a territory if they are given a map with the paths and hazards indicated and told the equipment they will need. Some people have to be carried or driven to a new territory. These are people who must have guides and servants. They cannot hew paths for themselves. I am hoping to steal people away from soap operas, lonely hearts' columnists, crooners, public lecturers (even like myself in one of my roles), movie houses, radio and television sets.²

¹ W. S. Cornell, *Report of the Development of Medical Inspection of Public Schools*, Philadelphia: The Board of Public Education, 1933.

² George Lawton in Clark Tibbitts (ed.), *Living Through the Older Years*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1949, pp. 114-115. By permission of the publisher.

The main requirement is that hobbies should be interesting and enjoyable to the person concerned. In one group of eighteen teachers, the following hobbies were represented: making dolls, assembling scrapbooks on particular themes, fishing, gardening, stamp collecting, ornithology, numismatics, cooking, knitting, crocheting, "being a pal to my son," reading (mentioned in three or four cases), boating, skiing, and training race horses. The sad part of this particular situation is that almost half of the teachers felt they were perhaps stealing time when they were pursuing their hobbies. It can be seen from the above list that age difference influenced the choice of the hobbies adopted. Skiing, training horses, and some types of fishing are activities that would not ordinarily appeal to older people—nor would they be an evidence of good common sense under such circumstances.

Time for oneself, whether it be devoted to activity or rest, is significant in both mental and physical health. But there is a need for balance. "One man's meat is another man's poison" is pertinent in evaluating the relative role of activity and relaxation. There is little reason to doubt the validity of the following statement by William James, a philosopher of widely acknowledged wisdom, though it was originally formulated in 1899: Writing of the value of tranquillity and meditation, he said, "I beg you teachers to think a little seriously of this matter. Perhaps you can help our rising generation of Americans toward the beginning of a better set of personal ideals."³

Elsewhere, he said:

... Your intense, convulsive worker breaks down and has bad moods so often that you never know where he may be when you most need his help—he may be having one of his "bad days." We say that so many of our fellow-countrymen collapse, and have to be sent abroad to rest their nerves, because they work so hard. I suspect that this is an immense mistake. I suspect that neither the nature nor the amount of our work is accountable for the frequency and severity of our breakdowns, but that their cause lies rather in those absurd feelings of hurry and having no time, in that breathlessness and tension, that anxiety of feature and that solicitude for results, that lack of inner harmony and ease, in short, by which with us the work is so apt to be accompanied, and from which a European who should do the same work would nine times out of ten be free. These perfectly wanton and unnecessary tricks of inner attitude and outer manner in us, caught from the social atmosphere, kept up by tradition, and idealized by many as the admirable way of life, are the last straws that break the American camel's back, the final overflows of our measure of wear and tear and fatigue.⁴

³ William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology*, new ed., New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1939, p. 75. By permission of the publisher.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 214–215. By permission of the publisher.

Recognizing the Mental Aspect of Personality. It may be that the mental challenge in teaching is sufficient, so that this aspect of personality need not be given more than incidental attention. Gaining more knowledge about the subject matter being taught, keeping abreast of scientific, cultural, and political trends, and studying new viewpoints of child and adolescent development may provide all the mental activity that is required in a healthy life. (It is emphasized in the section on What Are Good Teachers Like, Chapter 17, that meeting this challenge of personal growth is what produces interested and effective teachers.) But this constant attention to school-related mental activities may not furnish the well-rounded development that is a goal of mental health. Reading and study carried on just for the sake of curiosity, quite apart from any function it might play in effective teaching, is a pursuit worth considering. One of the most stimulating lecturers the author has been privileged to hear was Elwood P. Cubberley, who wrote or edited many, if not most, of the early twentieth-century textbooks in education. He once said that he had never done any studying after nine o'clock at night. As an undergraduate student, as a graduate student, and as professor and dean, he had stuck to this rule of not studying after nine. His reading after that hour was for enjoyment. In fact, certain evenings were set aside for free reading and only for exceptionally desirable substitutions were these evenings allowed to be interrupted. The consequence of this reading was informative and entertaining lectures that were punctuated with pertinent side remarks relating the subject at hand to many phases of life that might easily have been overlooked.

One of the occupational hazards sometimes mentioned in connection with teaching is that teachers, dealing so extensively with the immature minds of students, may begin to think like children and adolescents. If this is true, it is by no means necessarily so. Collateral reading and free reading can help to supply a contrast. The choice of companionship is an important consideration. While some are not in sympathy with those teachers who express contempt for "talking shop," there is good reason for actively seeking companionship among those who are not teachers, in addition to one's teaching friends. Careful cultivation of adult friendships may offset the danger of developing arrogant and domineering habits, which seem to be encouraged by extended contact with children. The accuracy of the teacher's information needs to be challenged frequently.

This challenge of the perfecting of knowledge may be met in part by active participation in school committees designed to seek improvement in educational practices. Thus, committee responsibilities, far from being an imposition on the teacher's time, are opportunities for exercising and developing the intellectual aspects of personality. The same thing may be

said for lively participation in community affairs. In order for one to be a contributing member, there is the need for him to keep informed about what other communities are doing with regard to the particular problem concerned, be it delinquency, improved police protection, how to deal with vice and gambling, how to improve the volunteer social services of the community, or improved curriculums and teaching methods.

Recognizing the Emotional Aspect of Personality. One of the more frequent comments on teaching made by teachers is to the effect that the emotional strain is great. Many teachers admit to feeling extremely tired at the end of the day, not because they have expended a great deal of physical energy, but, because of the emotional tension that is created by having to deal with the restlessness of pupils and the numberless problems presented by them. For this reason, conscious attention to a living program that provides for a healthful emotional release is most important for teachers. They need to cultivate the expression of the positive—such as upbuilding emotions as love, appreciation, and humor—as well as to seek opportunities for the release of pent-up emotions that result from taking seriously the responsibilities of teaching.

The intimate relationship of the various facets of personality is well illustrated in the bearing of physical exercise on the release of emotions. Numerous teachers, as well as adults in other occupations, find that walking, swimming, and participation in games and sports noticeably affects their feelings after a tense day of work. There is good psychological reason for this feeling, based on the W. B. Cannon, or emergency, theory of emotion. According to this theory, emotions prepare one to take part in conflict. The physiological effects of strong emotion (including more rapid heartbeat, constriction of the blood vessels in the extremities of the body, a temporary halting—or at least, a slowing down—of the process of digestion, and more rapid respiration, among other things) are such as to prepare one for vigorous physical activity. The supply of excess energy, caused or accompanied by certain glandular activity, demands activity which will consume that excess. Often, expressing this energy in the classroom in temper and physical force would be futile or destructive. But if the energy is not expended, it remains as a sort of poison to the entire system. Exercise outside the classroom will consume the energy and provide for a release of the repressed feelings. Hence, physical exercise is a means of recognizing the emotional aspects of personality.

In addition to the wisely directed use of negative emotional energy, there is the need to cultivate the upbuilding emotions. Love has been proved to be an emotion so important that it is listed among the fundamental needs of humans, for adults quite as much as for children. Teachers need to love and be loved. While marriage may not be essential for every person, it does seem that for the great majority this institution is

highly important in the accomplishment of well-rounded living. Undoubtedly, there are many well-adjusted persons who are not married and many poorly adjusted persons who are married. Statistics show, however, that married people have somewhat better health and longevity than do the unmarried, as a group. Words are inadequate for condemning those anachronistic school systems that will not hire married women as teachers. It seems that the administrators of such schools must be forgetting the welfare of children, for economic reasons. The excuse they give is that they wish to distribute salaries more widely than could be done if a wife were to work. Such a notion is absurd. Schools are established for the benefit of children, not for the distribution of wealth. Fortunately this custom appears to be disappearing.

Akin to both the physical and the emotional phases of life is the practice of relaxation, since physical relaxation demands as a prerequisite mental and emotional relaxation. One needs to cultivate the habit of taking time to himself, just to sit or lie doing nothing. Some psychiatrists regard the constant strain under which modern man keeps himself as the greatest liability to mental health. Relaxation helps in the digestion of food, it helps in the re-creation of energies, it stimulates enthusiasms for the next tasks to be faced. There are definite techniques for learning how to relax,⁵ but an essential factor is that of taking time. One must predispose himself to relaxation before it can be accomplished. The psychology of suggestion can be used; *i.e.*, if the attitude and posture of relaxation are assumed, there is greater likelihood of one's becoming relaxed. With practice, improved physical poise and emotional calm can be achieved.

There are, of course, many ways of exercising the upbuilding emotions, some of which appeal to one person and some to another. Many get true enjoyment and benefit in listening to music. Others are emotionally stimulated by taking solitary walks. Some find in motion pictures, dramatic productions, dance recitals, or art museums a source of stimulation for the mild, positive emotions. Individual hobbies of musical production, craftsmanship, drawing, painting, and various handicrafts are means of rounding out the orbit of activities and enjoyments. These are significant factors in full living and ought to be considered so important that time would be taken for them, instead of their being set aside until some convenient leisure moment.

Recognizing the emotional aspect of personality is not confined to cultural "highbrows"; much can be said in favor of the excitements of amusement parks, sports spectacles, travel to the many beauty spots of our own country and others. However, these are relatively passive, rather than creative, means of release. The main point to be considered is that each one of us has the capacity for expressing many kinds and degrees of

⁵ Edmund Jacobson, *You Must Relax*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1934; and *Progressive Relaxation*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929.

emotion and will find that the inevitable irritations of our lives can often be made more bearable by our taking advantage of diversions which give exercise to that emotional capacity. It should again be emphasized that emotional experiences are not to be sharply differentiated from the exercise of our physical and mental attributes. What is done for developing physical vigor can also contribute to the healthy exercise of emotion; and certainly many studious activities are meaningless without their emotional concomitants of satisfaction from achievement, the stimulus of new experiences, and the development of feelings of security in our own competence. Hence, balanced satisfactions are what are required and this balance will be hardly likely to be won without conscious planning.

Recognizing the Spiritual Aspect of Personality. Many find in religion an avenue leading to sound balance in their lives. For many, religious devotions are the source of the benefits which have been recommended in mental hygiene programs. A religion, such as Christianity or Judaism, which emphasizes the importance of love for and devotion to fellow men is stressing a sound principle of mental health. It must be admitted that there are religious fanatics. There are those who accept the form but not the essential practices of sane religion; and there are those who rely upon a deity to solve their problems, instead of taking positive action themselves. However, religion can be, and is for many people, a means of attaining the fullest meaning in life.⁶

One advantage of religion, when it stresses love for others, is that it helps a person to get outside himself. It makes more probable his being genuinely concerned with the problems of others.

Christ says to the teacher, "Make the interests and aims of each of your scholars your own." Whether a teacher is a Christian in the profoundest sense of the term depends not in the least on whether he is a Catholic or a Protestant, a Conservative or a Liberal. It depends on whether the teacher has his own point of view, his personal interests, and then regards the scholars as alien beings to be dealt with as the rules of the school may require and as his own personal interest and reputation may suggest; or whether in sympathy and generous interest he makes the life and problems of each scholar a genuine part of the problem of his own enlarged nature and generous heart. The greatest difference between teachers, after all, is that in this deepest sense some teachers are Christians and some teachers are not.⁷

The fact that the above statement was written in 1910 does not by any means make the thought outdated. Notable psychologists and psychiatrists

⁶ See Harold W. Bernard, *Toward Better Personal Adjustment*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1951, pp. 365-393, for more extensive discussion.

⁷ William DeWitt Hyde, *The Teacher's Philosophy in and out of School*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1910, pp. 77-78. By permission of the publisher.

place the same emphasis on the importance of religion in living a well-rounded, mature life. H. A. Overstreet indicates that being able to get outside oneself is fundamental to genuine psychological maturity.

Religion in the sense of *binding together* invites man to a mature relationship with life—and therefore, in behalf of that relationship, to a mature development of his own potentialities. The religious life, in this sense, is the one in which there is a constant effort to link oneself, in joy and contribution, to all the life-giving movements of one's world. The religious life, in short, is what we have been describing as the maturing life: it is the maturing life deeply and passionately committed to the search for wholeness.

Today, therefore, religion and psychological science may properly join hands. When it is mature, religion aims at man's maturing. In like manner, psychological science, as it matures, aims at man's maturing.⁸

The time spent in religious devotion is, for some, a period of mental and physical relaxation. The soft, slow music of the organ and the choir helps to bring peace of mind that makes for physical and mental repose. Thoughts about the Almighty lead to a perspective of viewpoint that reveals a plan transcending our personal desires and makes it somewhat easier for us to bear our own minor burdens. This gives the mental repose that leads to more complete relaxation. Belief in a deity who cares about us personally contributes to the emotional poise which, in the long run, will help to prevent the accumulation of tensions that makes it so difficult for us to achieve relaxation.

Some may question the idea that man has a spiritual side of his nature, equal or parallel in importance to the mental, physical, and emotional aspects of his personality. The fact is that people in all countries and of all races seem to be reaching out toward some power which is mightier than they are. The author feels that the universal manifestation of this need would not be evident if there were nothing that could satisfy it. Powerful and intelligent as man is, there seem to be times when the stresses of life are too much for him, so he seeks help and guidance from his particular deity—God, Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed, or Allah. Precisely at this point religion makes its great contribution to mental health. A religion that gives a person the assurance that there is help available for him and, at the same time, leaves responsibilities for him to carry out, makes it easier for him to face his problems with fortitude.

SATISFYING HUMAN NEEDS

Chapter 2, on Human Needs and Mental Health, dealt with some basic considerations in the achievement and maintenance of mental health. But

⁸ H. A. Overstreet, *The Mature Mind*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1949, p. 268. By permission of the publisher.

there the emphasis was primarily upon the needs of school pupils. It is necessary for teachers also to satisfy these basic needs. Only cursory references will be made here to indicate the significance of considering them in evolving a wholesome philosophy of life.

The Need to Love and Be Loved. We hear and read frequent discussions that deal with the necessity of loving and being loved. Children have a right to be loved because of what they are—children. But teachers, as well as other adults, must earn that right by what they do. Satisfaction of this need for adults must come not so much from being loved as from loving. As teachers, we must implement the need by stressing the outgoing kind of love. The responsibility has been briefly stated by Benson Ford, Vice-President of the Ford Motor Company.

Let's admit very frankly that we haven't lived up to our own ideals. Here, in a nation which is the acknowledged champion of democracy, we are still beset by intolerance, prejudice, bigotry and racism. We are in the paradoxical position of believing wholeheartedly in man and yet denying to other men, even here in our own country, the respect and tolerance which man deserves.⁹

The implications of this need are simply that our philosophy must embrace the need to contribute to the welfare of others. "This fundamental drive is not always adequately recognized, but clinical psychologists know that those persons who do not develop *or express it* are likely to be victims of unpopularity, introversion, and unhappiness."¹⁰

Two simple suggestions are proffered for satisfying the need to love. (1) Study the nature of people and the background of individuals, so that the understanding which is fundamental to love may be gained. (2) Act as though you loved others, so that a positive psychology of suggestion may function. It is not enough to realize that love is important; something must be done about it.

The Need to Accomplish. The profession of teaching presents countless opportunities for the satisfaction of the need to accomplish. Every pupil who has not realized the full potential of his capacity (hence, all the pupils) affords an opportunity for something of importance to be done. Study after study of the mental health of teachers indicates that those who are happy and mentally healthy are the ones who study their responsibility and their pupils so that accomplishment of their aims counts toward their own benefit and that of their charges, as well. Accomplish-

⁹ Benson Ford, "A Moral Basis for Our Leadership," an address, Nov. 13, 1950.

¹⁰ Paul A. Witty and C. E. Skinner (eds.), *Mental Hygiene in Modern Education*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1939, p. 367. (Italics not in original.) By permission of the publisher.

ment requires effort, but that effort pays rich dividends in better mental health.

The Need for Security. Satisfaction of the need for security cannot be bestowed upon anyone; it must be earned. Adults must earn, and many teachers have earned, a sense of security through devoting time and energy to increased competence. This fundamental aspect of security has been well expressed by Emory Alvord, an "agricultural missionary" in the Bantu region of Southern Rhodesia.

I believe more firmly than ever in the infinite potential in people—any people, all people. But their improvement must come always from within themselves. I have no faith in handouts of any kind, economic or spiritual. Abraham Lincoln once said, "You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves." We need to inscribe that statement large across every plan we make these days. . . .¹¹

There is a twofold implication for the teacher. First, his own security is dependent upon individual effort and competence. Second, it is a lesson that is sorely needed by school pupils—the citizens of tomorrow.

The Need to Develop Tension-tolerance. The development of tension-tolerance is at one and the same time a matter of experience and of attitude. A person develops a tolerance for obstacles and conflicts not solely by saying that he enjoys adversity, but also by experiencing adversity. Hence, as an aspect of philosophy, the significant thing is to realize that problems, difficulties, or obstacles are sources of growth and development. Unpleasant experiences, unless they are so disastrous as to result in the disintegration of personality, are a means of inoculating one to endure further conflicts, which are an inevitable accompaniment of vigorous living. Some writers have gone as far as to say that one should do something every day that he does not want to do, simply because he does not want to do it. It would not seem necessary to go out of the way to make life unpleasant, but it is the part of wisdom to recognize that there is a growth-promoting factor in facing difficulty and adversity.

The Need to Be Independent. As a factor in personal philosophy, the need to be independent justifies the effort devoted to accomplishment and to the development of tension-tolerance. In some instances, it would be more to the point to admonish administrators to give their teachers a chance to be independent. But since this book is addressed to classroom teachers, let them understand that their independence should be earned by proving that their methods are such as will warrant approval. If attention is devoted to *earning* independence, the bellicose conception of

¹¹ Liston Pope and Clarence W. Hall, "The Man Who Founded a People," *The Reader's Digest*, Vol. 58 (March, 1951), p. 55. Condensed from *Christian Herald* and used by permission of *The Reader's Digest*.

independence, that it is part of a person's birthright—something to be maintained by personal warfare—will be avoided. A healthy independence is not equivalent to rugged individualism—a matter of “dog eat dog.” It should be thought of as a reward for consistently recognizing the rights, interests, and welfare of others. The need for independence should be put into play in strict accord with the satisfaction of the need to love—to be concerned with the happiness of others. As a matter of practical fact, society will permit independence only to those who do manifest concern about the welfare of others.

The Need for a Task, a Plan, and Freedom to Carry Out That Plan. This three-faceted human need is the very essence of personal philosophy. Teachers have their task—a task which society recognizes as of prime importance. Their experience and training should contribute to their making and remaking of plans, without which there will be much dissipated effort and many disappointing results. If their plans are democratically and humanely oriented, they will, in the majority of cases, have the freedom to execute those plans.

The problems, from the standpoint of philosophy, are patent: (1) The task of teaching needs to be repeatedly and continuously thought through, so that there is maximum adjustment to the exigencies of the time. (2) Plans need to be varied, to be reconstructed, for many reasons; not the least of these is that teachers need to avoid getting “into a rut.” (3) As in the case of independence (a mere rewording), freedom must be earned in terms of its orientation to others. Herein are contained the basic elements in a functional philosophy that can never be allowed to become static if it is to enhance the teacher's mental health.

Other Basic Needs. There are other basic needs which must be satisfied if optimum mental health is to be consummated. The need to maintain good physical health was mentioned in the foregoing section. Planning for the satisfaction of this need warrants a place in one's philosophy of daily living. The need for companionship, in spite of its close relationship to the need to love and be loved, deserves separate consideration. Some suggestions pertinent to this need are made in the section on Positive Principles of Mental Health, which follows.

The satisfaction of needs is a continuous problem. Like other aspects of mental hygiene, a need does not remain “satisfied”; we can only work toward *being on the way* to its satisfaction. Incorporating the concept of needs into one's functional philosophy will tend to give them the continuing attention which they deserve.

POSITIVE PRINCIPLES OF MENTAL HEALTH

Another approach to the teacher's personal philosophy can be made by incorporating into that philosophy those values and action patterns

which are conducive to good mental health. The following principles not only are principles of mental hygiene, but they are sources of suggestions for the exercise of the various aspects of personality and are means of satisfying fundamental human needs.

Maintain Sound Physical Health. This, we have seen, covers several minor considerations, such as getting sufficient sleep, paying attention to a sensible diet, providing for rest and recreation, getting whole-body exercise appropriate to one's age level, and taking care of minor ailments before they become aggravated. The value of this item is set forth in the ancient ideal, "A sound mind in a sound body."

Seek to Gain Understanding of Your Own Conduct. Teachers, because of their interest in human development and motivation, are in an advantageous position for seeing themselves more objectively. If the studies of psychology and mental hygiene are viewed as opportunities for recognizing one's own motivations, conditionings, and learnings, as well as those of pupils, the one who applies them can take a more objective view of himself. While there is a risk that too much self-analysis may be harmful, there is also the possibility that, by studying such courses, one can, through discretion, make evaluations of himself and his progress. The study we pursue for understanding others can help us to see that, in spite of limitations, we have an important job to do; it can teach us to use constructive criticism on ourselves; and it can give us indications as to how we can appreciate our own handicaps by vicariously placing ourselves in other people's shoes. Pursuit of this objective will serve to exercise both the mental and the emotional components of personality.

Achieve Security through Developing Skills. Teachers who have realized the importance of developing skills in children in order to give them improved mental health will realize that their own security can be strengthened by skill development. This might take the form of developing greater competence in subject matter, of an improved understanding of the course and nature of child and adolescent development, or of becoming an authority in some phase of educational development other than classroom teaching—such as undertaking curriculum study, becoming a guidance expert or an authority in mental hygiene, or seeking to improve the status of education as a profession.

Just as work therapy is effective in helping those who have broken under mental and emotional strain, so too it is effective in maintaining good mental health. The skills that are developed to improve the effectiveness of work thus contribute to a greater enjoyment of work and aid in hearty devotion and application to the daily tasks that are required. That is, increased skills lead to an improved attitude toward work, and improved attitudes contribute to a desire for higher skill. Attention to this point will

exercise the mental and physical aspects of personality and tend to gratify the emotional needs.

Seek Improved Relationships with Others. It has been repeatedly emphasized that the teacher's relationships with his pupils is of prime importance in effective teaching. But we should not be content with seeking to improve our relationships with children only. Attention should be given to improving adult relationships, as well. We should all selfishly profit from taking more time to be friendly, both to youngsters and to adults. Our interest in others will not only help them to face their problems with equanimity but it will also help us to see our own problems more objectively by comparing them with the lot of others. It is a psychological fact, as well as a religious principle, that the giving of yourself to others builds a stronger and more harmonious personality. Seeking to improve social relationships, while primarily giving exercise to the emotional phases of personality, will most frequently also provide some intellectual stimulation. It is said by the devotees of friendship that any of us can learn from the lowliest persons.

Maintain Confidential Relationships with Selected Individuals. This is not just another phase of seeking improved relationships with others. It is a separate endeavor and has different values and results. This implies more than a casual friendly relationship. It is a matter of having a person in whom one can place sufficient confidence so that intimate secrets may be shared. Having a person in whom we can confide our problems, complain about our disappointments, and boast about our accomplishments provides for an emotional catharsis that tends to prevent the building up of unwholesome tensions. Sigmund Freud has significantly helped people in trouble by serving as an intimate confidant; and since his discovery, many of his disciples (as well as his critics) have utilized the same approach. The popular idea of the benefit of "getting it off your chest" and "taking down your hair" has been experimentally proved to have a psychological basis.

The person who is selected as this intimate confidant must be chosen with care. He or she must be a person who is capable of holding intact the secrets which are confided. If a confidant were selected on the spur of the moment, it is possible that more mature reflection will cause some doubts to arise that will more than nullify the release that has been gained by telling another about our troubles. Concern lest the information should go too far may well create tensions that are as dangerous as those that would result from the repression of the original problem. The confidant must be free of the neurotic tendency of oversuspiciousness. For example, if he were to confide in you and later were to feel that he had discovered in the conversations of others evidence that you had betrayed a confidence, even if you had in fact held it inviolate, there would be difficulties for

both of you. Thus, at times it may be necessary for one to discourage a friend from telling too much about himself.

However, if the above precautions are observed, there are strong advantages inherent in an intimate confidential relationship of this kind. It will serve primarily to provide wholesome exercise of the emotional aspect of personality, but inasmuch as it also makes for better understanding of ourselves and others, it exercises the mental phase of personality, besides serving the function of emotional release.

Face Stress and Strain with Poise. It may be that this point is futile, in that it involves lifting oneself by his bootstraps, as it were. It is valid to ask the question, Can I stop worrying just by saying that I will not worry? It may be that it is no more possible for a person who faces strain not to be excited about it than it is for a person who is ill to get well by saying that it is foolish to be sick. But as a matter of fact, even the latter is a practical possibility. There is a psychology of suggestion that makes it possible to get rid of *some* illnesses that are *apparently* physical in nature. Remember that some authorities say that over half the beds in general hospitals are filled by mental patients. Many of these could be helped by a positive psychology of suggestion.

There are, however, some suggestions for achieving poise that go beyond the determination to be more poised. For one thing, it will be well to reflect on the fact that other people have troubles, too, and yet seem, in general, to go on enjoying life. Past experiences tell us that "This too shall pass away." We have but to reflect on the experiences of last year to realize that many of the things that worried us somehow or other did not greatly change the course of events; that some of the things which seemed tremendous at one time now appear to be trivial matters. The same may be true of some of the things that are causing concern today when they are looked at from the vantage point of next week, next month, or next year. We need to realize that for each of us, just as for the pupils we teach, one event does not make a lifetime. Our problems, just like the grass in the other field, are to some extent dependent upon the view taken of them. My neighbor's lawn looks so much greener and more velvety than mine, until I walk over and look directly down upon it. Then I discover that his lawn, too, has a few weeds in it, some brown and thin places, and a few depressions in the ground level. So our problems appear in a different light when viewed from a saner perspective. Another fact to take into account in seeking emotional poise is that some things are beyond our power to control. It does no good to fret about anything that is personally unavoidable. Finally, it may at times pay to take the Pollyanna attitude that even evil or disliked things and events may hold advantages for us. It is a recognized fact that not all obstacles to enjoyment should be removed from a child's path. So that as an adult he can face disap-

pointment, he must learn that obstacles are a source of stimulation to added growth. Our own obstacles can serve as a stimulant to continued growth.

Substitute Planning for Worry. There are many people who object to the idea that worry has no place in a mentally healthy life. These people come closer to agreement with the "nonworriers" if they accept the following definition of worry: It is a form of circular thinking that goes over and over the same things without arriving at a workable or even a tentative conclusion. Worry solves no problems; it changes no situations for the good. It does aggravate the negative emotions, and it prevents one from trying out some solution to a problem. Thus, worry defined as circular thinking possesses no advantages for any individual.

Anticipation of difficulties, planning for eventualities, formulating hypotheses in advance do have advantages. It is advisable and necessary that data be gathered, that alternatives be devised, that solutions be tried; but this is directed—not circular—thinking. When, after a problem has been thought through, there seems to be no present solution, it is probably just as well—at least, for the time being—to apply the solution suggested by the song title of the thirties, "Let's Put Out the Light and Go to Sleep."

Planning gives exercise to the intellectual phase of personality; the repudiation of worry is a recognition of the fact that the emotional phase of personality can be overtaxed. Worry, as circular thinking, means that normal conflicts develop into nerve-racking frustrations. Problems remain bottled up. They are intensified and become festering centers of diseased emotions. Dr. Peter J. Steincrohn in his book, *How to Stop Killing Yourself*, says that worry is one of the ways to "slow suicide."¹² We worry to the extent that we are unable to make decisions. The remedy is simple. Force yourself to make a decision. All the data on any problem are never completely assembled. We must act on tentative decisions. Mistakes are inevitable. But the continuous mistake of chronic procrastination can be abjured. The sensible person is the one who does not continue making the same error. Planning, directed thinking, making decisions, and acting on tentative conclusions are steps toward bringing about the diffusion of the slow poison of worry.

Give Both Work and Play a Place in Your Life. Mental health is a matter of balance. The integrated person is one whose various and multiple drives are harmoniously coordinated and work together toward some inclusive purpose. "Integration" is used to indicate mental coordination and assemblage of component parts into a workable whole which, when

¹² Peter J. Steincrohn, *How to Stop Killing Yourself*, New York: Wilfred Funk, Inc., 1950.

achieved, enables the individual to receive a wide range and variety of stimuli and still retain a high degree of unification of component processes. A well-integrated person can think, feel, and act appropriately under various life situations." ¹³ One of the many situations in which conscious direction of balance is needed is in giving both work and play a place in our lives.

Mental health, we have seen, depends upon the satisfying of certain fundamental needs. Many of these fundamental needs are most effectively satisfied by one's engaging in a working life. Such requirements as the need for achievement, the need for recognition, the desire for adventure, relief from worry, the need for security are well served through devotion to one's work—in whatever line it may be. The really permanent satisfactions, the eternal hopes of man, reside in his work.

But work alone does not necessarily ensure balance. The work of some calls mainly on the physical aspects of personality. Others work primarily in intellectual areas. Some are called upon to endure prolonged emotional tensions. If more of man's capacities are to be exercised, work activities must be supplemented with recreational pursuits. Ideally, one's leisure-time activities should be in contrast with his work, so that there is a greater chance for the exercise of all capacities. Many of the satisfactions that may be gained from work may also be achieved through wisely selected and regularly pursued recreations. It is possible to gain achievement, recognition, adventure, and confidence from recreational concerns.

Certainly, the teacher need have no compunction about regularly scheduling a period of leisure. The release of tensions through play will make for a more enjoyable classroom atmosphere for his pupils. His exercise of different capacities will give him more common ground upon which to meet and understand children who have varied interests. His recreations will carry him into wider areas of the community and reveal new avenues for making the teaching of subject matter increasingly functional. His play will refresh him after the tedium of classroom problems. Balanced recreation is not an escape. It is a means of coordinating many and diverse drives into the inclusive purpose of enjoyable and effective teaching.

It must be borne in mind that giving both work and play a place in your life is a matter of relativity. It is not an either-or proposition. Some people devote themselves so assiduously to their work that they have no time for play. But this is at the cost of a threat—frequently a realized threat—to personality integration. Others derive so much pleasure from play that they have no time for work. But pleasure is bought at the cost of that more enduring quality called "happiness." In the end, play

¹³ Frank E. Howard and Frederick L. Patry, *Mental Health*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1935, pp. 18-19. By permission of the publisher.

alone palls on the individual and he awakes, some day, to find that frustration has taken the place of both pleasure and happiness.

Give Attention to the Present Situation. Giving attention to the present situation is simply a matter of applying good common sense. What is past is past, and nothing can be done to change behavior already enacted or events previously transpired; but—and this is highly important—past errors should be avoided in present actions. What has not yet happened need cause no concern, except—again highly important—that we can today lay the foundations for a favorable trend of events. We do all of our living today. We solve all of our problems now. Unbalanced living today reduces the possibility of living a balanced life in the future.

The importance of living fully and completely today was well illustrated for the author some years ago by an army captain, though it took some time for the lesson to be appreciated. At the time, the author was an educational adviser in a Civilian Conservation Corps camp, living in the temporary barracks characteristic of that organization. The room was barren, wide cracks showed in the floor and walls, and the only furniture was a bunk. An apple box was nailed to the wall to hold shaving gear and a few books. A blanket was nailed over the window to cut off the winter cold. A gunny sack on the floor served to add to morning comfort, pieces of 1- by 12-inch board were nailed together for a chair, there was a straw tick on the bunk, and some packing boxes served as a table. Simple living was the order of the day because of the temporariness of the situation. We anticipated being ordered to another location with the melting of the snows. The captain lived on an entirely different scale. His room had attractive draperies, there was a hooked rug on the floor, he had a box-spring and inner-spring mattress, there were some pictures on the wall. An overstuffed chair, a bedspread, a bookcase with several books, and a radio contributed to comfortable living. One evening the question was asked, "Captain S., why do you have all these comforts when you know that we'll be ordered out of here in the near future?" (We were moved within four weeks.) The answer was immediate and clear-cut, "Well, I'll tell you, Bernard—something you may take a long time to realize—this temporary living turns out to be a very permanent thing." The individual who realizes and acts upon the truth contained in that answer is indeed fortunate.

It seems certain that many of us need to absorb this lesson. We live and work for better things tomorrow, next week, or next year. In the meantime, our lives are running their course. We are forming habits that make it increasingly improbable that we shall retain the capacity for full and complete living. The soundest, perhaps the only, approach to facing the uncertainties of the future with equanimity is to attack with vigor the problems of today. Those who are inclined to glorify the past and to

romance about the future would do well to appreciate the fact that we inevitably carry our habits with us. Unhappiness is as surely a matter of habit as is application to (or disdain for) work. All of our living we do today. An effort should be made to make today enjoyable and effective.

Appreciate the Humor in Daily Situations. One way to make living enjoyable today is to attune ourselves to the humorous events that are continually happening. There are many things that may serve to "brighten the day with a smile" if we but look for the amusing elements. Perhaps the first step to be taken is to develop an objective notion of our own importance. When we can relax to the extent of realizing that the world might possibly get along without us, we shall be able to appreciate some of the ridiculous aspects of our own behavior. Perhaps some of our motions (although we are adults) are somewhat like the unnatural, swinging, strutting stride of an adolescent boy—who looks funny to us. In some ways our gait may resemble, though less noticeably, the parading walk of an adolescent girl. Both the girl and we are amusing if we but look with objectivity and discernment. Most of us, at some time, have stood off and gleefully evaluated the creations women wear on their heads. Many opportunities have been afforded us to grin knowingly at men's conceit. Most men (judging from their own reports) seem to think that they are personally and individually "God's gift to women." With due consciousness of our own facial limitations, we might possibly find reason to smile at the odd appearance of eyes, ears, nose, or mouth of even some national figure.

In the classroom both the behavior and the remarks of students give plenty of opportunities for amusement (though we must be careful never to offend a sensitive pupil). Young children make many ridiculous errors when they attempt to introduce new words into their conversations. Hilarious answers to questions are given in oral and written quizzes. These latter may well make us pause to examine the meaningfulness of our teaching, but they can, nevertheless, serve to entertain and amuse us. Just recently, the author noticed suppressed humor in a class of teachers when they heard one of their members, complaining about the spelling of his eighth-graders, say, "They can't hardly spell nothing."

A sense of humor and a capacity to avoid taking oneself too seriously will be helpful for anyone—particularly for a teacher. Yet this point of view may be easily lost unless it is consciously cultivated. Its significance in the classroom is indicated in the following statement:

The joyful laughter which comes from euphoria and a bubbling over of good humor is particularly common with children. The adult rarely has the carefree well-being to enjoy this type of laughter to the full. The comic laugh at something incongruous or funny seems to be experienced more often than the joyous laughter of sheer good spirits. Laughter appears to be

a kind of universal language which we can interpret with the help of supplementary cues and thereby know how our associates act. Laughter is amazingly contagious and is an excellent tool in the control of self and groups.¹⁴

Just Do the Best You Can. The idea of just doing one's best is not a philosophy of mediocrity. It is not a laissez-faire or opportunistic doctrine. Rather, it is an attitude of common sense, an aspect of facing reality, and a means of obtaining balanced activities and sensible perspective.

An incident which took place on a firing range well illustrates the practicability of just doing one's best. A candidate for a marksman's medal was making excellent progress and one day the range supervisor said, "I think you should shoot for record now." The rounds for rapid and slow fire at 25 and 50 yards were shot and the targets were examined. The requisite score had not been achieved.

The supervisor said, "I'm not surprised. You were trying to do better than you can do. Listen, you *can't* do any better than you *can* do, can you?"

The answer obviously was, "No."

"Certainly not. No one hits the bull's-eye every time. The best marksmen miss now and then. In fact, they don't try to hit the center with every shot. They just do the best they can. You'll do much better if you just do the best you can. Here's what happens. If you try for perfection, you jerk the trigger when you have the sights lined up with the target. Jerking throws the gun out of line and, by the time the gun fires, you are way off center. Just do the best you can, keep squeezing, keep squeezing, *squeezing* and come as close as you can. Often you will feel that you are off target, but keep squeezing and, by the time the gun fires, you will be back on your target—or nearly so. You can't be perfect. *Just come as close as you can and keep squeezing.*"

In this chapter and the previous one are many suggestions for improved living and improved teaching. None of us can achieve perfection on any point, much less on all points (25 and 50 yards at rapid and slow fire). But each of us can do better. We can keep steadily trying (squeezing) and doing the best we can. If one were to try to be perfect in understanding all children, in encouraging creativity, in teaching all the lessons children should learn, he would not have time to achieve balance in cultivating friendships, in pursuing his own creative hobbies, in giving attention to the preservation of physical health.

¹⁴ Daniel Starch, Hazel M. Stanton, Wilhelmine Koerth, *Controlling Human Behavior*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1936, p. 248. By permission of the publisher.

Just doing the best you can will prevent the development of a distinct hazard to mental health—that of perfectionism. Frustration is to a marked extent caused by failing to do what one sets out to do. The housewife who wants her home kept immaculately clean will become frustrated. The businessman who will brook no errors or shortcomings from his employees is headed for difficulty. The teacher who expects all her pupils to surpass the national average on an achievement test is going to be dissatisfied. The truly healthy person is not going to be satisfied with just anything, but he will see the wisdom of being content with doing the best he can.

Capitalize on the Mental Health Values of Religion. It has been previously noted that the human personality has four major facets, though they may not be sharply differentiated in the living person. These facets are the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual. A number of mental hygienists and psychiatrists give religion an important place in the development of the well-rounded individual—the mentally healthy person.¹⁵ The late Joshua Liebman has made a noteworthy contribution by showing how closely the aims of mental hygiene parallel the lessons and aims of religion.¹⁶

Contrary to the belief (which is a holdover from an earlier era) that it is the adolescent who seeks to find a religious purpose, it is the adult or the person in later maturity who is seriously concerned about the place of religion in effective living. "As one advances in years he appreciates more the significance of the days which have elapsed and the possibilities of those that remain. He may in a search for an explanation of things resort much more actively to religion than was the case in his earlier years."¹⁷ The teacher, for his own mental health as well as for the welfare of his pupils, might well reexamine the contributions that a balanced religion can make to joyful and harmonious living.

Religion has, through many centuries, proved its value as an avenue for such achievement. We can no more expect to receive the benefits of spiritual values by mere waiting than we can expect to achieve efficiency in our profession without working. Attending the services of a chosen church is a first and fundamental step. We need to be periodically reminded of our spiritual obligations. We need some concrete suggestions as to how our religion can be implemented. Church services do more than remind. The hymns and music encourage at least a momentary slowing down of the tempo of life. Prayer provides a kind of emotional catharsis from the press of irksome problems. The very architecture of

¹⁵ See Bernard, *op. cit.*, pp. 387-390, for representative views.

¹⁶ Joshua Loth Liebman, *Peace of Mind*, New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1946.

¹⁷ Winfred Overholser in William B. Terhune (ed.), *Living Wisely and Well*, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1949, p. 94. By permission of the publisher.

the church stimulates a feeling of firmness and permanence in a rapidly changing world. Active participation in church provides an avenue of contact with others who—though they may be presently far from ideal persons—are seeking improvement in their way of life. Though the minister, priest, or rabbi (by whatever title he may be known) will not limit his help because one is not active in the church, it is reassuring to know that in time of need he is known and is available.

Lord, who am I to teach the way
 To eager children day by day?
 So prone myself to go astray.
 I teach them knowledge, but I know
 How faint the flicker and how low
 The candles of my power do glow.
 I teach them power to will and do,
 But only now to learn anew
 My own great weakness through and through.
 I teach them love for all mankind
 And all God's creatures, but I find
 My love comes lagging still behind.
 Lord, if their guide I still must be,
 Oh, let the eager children see
 Their teacher leaning hard on Thee.¹⁸

Learn to Enjoy Living. Perhaps this suggestion is not so much an additional point as it is a summary of the foregoing. Perhaps, too, it is something like advising a person to lift himself by his bootstraps. Nevertheless, the fact remains that happiness, the enjoyment of living, is an outstanding characteristic of mental health. Chronic unhappiness is a symptom of the existence of problems that have not been solved and are not on the way to being solved.

Happiness, of course, is nothing more than a symptom, a by-product of healthy living. To make it an end in itself, to regard it as an objective, is a fairly sure way of losing it. To make a pretense at happiness in some Pollyanna fashion, is neither very mature nor very healthy. To recognize unhappiness when it exists, to search out the cause of that unhappiness, and to do something constructive about removing it—such is the procedure of healthy people.¹⁹

The enjoyment of living will normally result from the maintenance of good physical health, from understanding one's motives and capacities,

¹⁸ Used by permission of the author, Leslie Pinckney Hill, State College, Eau Claire, Wis.

¹⁹ C. Roger Myers, *Toward Mental Health in School*, Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1939, pp. 140-141. By permission of the publisher.

from sound human relationships, from balance between work and play, from arriving at and acting upon tentative conclusions, and the like. There will inevitably be periods of discouragement and depression. Indeed, the person who is happy in spite of all circumstances is a fit subject for an asylum. The well-balanced person regards the temporary disappointments incident to vigorous living for what they are—transient difficulties. It is not healthy to dwell upon the unpleasant things. Steps, immediate steps, should be taken to remove the difficulty if it is remediable. If it is unavoidable, if the source lies outside the individual, then attention should be directed to compensating activities. Unhappiness is just as surely an indicator of inadequate habits of adjustment as is a rise of temperature an indication of physical distress. The symptom should not be ignored. It is dangerous to tell oneself that nothing is wrong—that it is just a state of mind. The causes must be determined. When, after the causes have been found, they are either avoided or eliminated, one is on the way to the enjoyment of living.

The source of much of people's inability to enjoy life is, as Myers has suggested in the above quotation, due to a direct seeking of happiness—making it a matter of too much self-concern. It follows that getting at causes will frequently lead to the conclusion that one must solidly identify himself with his fellow men. Happiness is an outcome of activity, purpose, and usefulness. It is a by-product of putting the foregoing suggestions into constructive operation. Certainly, reading about the subject is not enough. "Happiness is not an end in itself but is what accompanies the experience of increase in potency, while impotence is accompanied by depression; potency and impotence refer to all powers characteristic of man."²⁰ This can be restated by saying that the enjoyment of living accrues from the balanced and constructive exercise of as many of one's capacities as is possible.

SUMMARY

Mental hygiene is a way of life that will enable everyone to attain a fuller, happier, more harmonious, and more effective existence. Philosophy is a way of looking at, of evaluating, life so that better mental health may be achieved. From a purely selfish viewpoint, but also from that of professional responsibility, teachers should give thoughtful consideration to the formulation of a functional philosophy of life. There can be no satisfactory universal prescription for such a philosophy, but whatever it is, it should seek to exercise the major facets of personality—the physical, the mental, the emotional, and the spiritual.

Teachers, just as do all other human individuals, have certain fundamental needs. There are many lists of such fundamental needs, but most of

²⁰ Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1947, p. 27. By permission of the publisher.

them include certain things in common—either explicitly stated or implied. There is a need to love and a need to be loved. Everyone needs to accomplish, to achieve, however great or small the performance may be. The degree of accomplishment, if it is to contribute to mental health, must accord with one's capacity and his level of aspiration. One must be secure; but it is important to know that security is dependent upon the individual's ability to solve his own problems, to stand on his own feet. Hence, security depends upon the development of skills and competencies. One needs to develop tension-tolerance. He needs enough difficult experiences so that he will be inoculated against the inevitable difficulties and disappointments that a vigorous life inevitably presents. If mental health is to be realized, it is necessary for every person to have a task, a plan, and freedom to carry out that plan. Teachers are fortunate in this last requirement. They have a task—the most basic and important task that anyone can have—namely, guiding the development of young people. Plans are readily available to them, though each plan must be adapted to the particular situation in which the teacher functions. There are few restrictions on the teacher, though one may find himself occasionally in a suspicious community or working under an autocratic administrator. In the main, however, one's freedom is only restricted by his lack of vision. Such needs as these deserve serious consideration in the formulation of one's working philosophy.

The teacher's philosophy should include fundamental mental hygiene values. The summarizing list below offers suggestions for exercising the various facets of personality and for satisfying fundamental human needs.

Attention should be given to the maintenance of good physical health.

One should seek insight into his own conduct through the study of psychology, sociology, philosophy, and of other humans.

A sense of genuine security should be sought through the conscious development of skills and knowledge.

Time should be devoted to the improvement of relationships with others.

Confidential relationships should be established with a few selected and mature persons.

One should seek to develop the habit of facing inevitable stress and strain with a high degree of emotional poise.

Worry (as circular thinking) should be dogmatically replaced with problem solving and the ability to act on tentative conclusions.

An integrated personality will be fostered by a sane balance between the roles of work and play.

While one should learn from past errors and plan for the future, the major emphasis should be placed on giving attention to the present situation.

Studied attention should be devoted to attuning ourselves to the humorous elements that are inherent in daily living.

While one need not subscribe to the doctrine of mediocrity, he should not be frustrated by the ideal of perfectionism. He should learn to do just the best he can.

Many persons have learned that exercising the spiritual aspects of life can contribute much to complete living.

Happiness is less a goal to be sought than it is a symptom that one has achieved a philosophy that contributes to optimal mental health.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION EXERCISES

1. What evidences have you seen that teachers do not take adequate care of their physical health?
2. What are some dangers that must be avoided in the attempt to gain insight into one's own conduct?
3. Criticize the viewpoint that the development of skills is the way to security in adulthood.
4. Suggest a number of things that might be done to improve adult social relationships within your school.
5. Report on some experience you have had relative to a confidential relationship with another person.
6. Recall two or three events in the past year which have caused you some emotional stress. What evaluation can you place on them after a lapse of time?
7. Can you agree that worry (as circular thinking) is foolish and futile?
8. Solicit from your classmates their opinions as to what are some worthwhile leisure activities, especially for teachers.
9. What are some drawbacks to the idea of giving attention to the present situation?
10. Make a list of items from daily experiences that are appropriate reasons for the exercise of humor.
11. Attend a church service, overlook any dislike you might have for the leader, the members of the congregation, or the ceremony, and list the suggestions (not just the verbal one) appropriate to mental health.
12. Criticize the idea that it is enough for one to do just the best he can.

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

FOSDICK, HARRY EMERSON, *On Being a Real Person*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943. 265 pp.

Life is not simply a matter of heredity and environment but also a matter of what we do toward capitalizing on the foundations provided. In order to make the best of life, a faith in ourselves and in a higher being is fundamental. The author points out the close relationship between religion and mental hygiene. A teacher has written, "This is a wonderful book."

OVERSTREET, H. A., *The Mature Mind*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1949. 295 pp.

The author postulates certain criteria of maturity and indicates the reasons (personal, economic, social, political) for so many people's failing to achieve them. Many suggestions are given to the individual for doing something about his own areas of immaturity. Emphasis is placed on the use of intelligence to control emotion.

TERHUNE, WILLIAM B. (ed.), *Living Wisely and Well*, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1949. 95 pp.

A discussion of mental hygiene in four inclusive chapters is presented. The problem of mental hygiene, mental hygiene in childhood, adulthood, and later maturity are the divisions. Constructive, down-to-earth suggestions are given throughout.

TRIBBITTS, CLARK, *Living through the Older Years*, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1949. 193 pp.

This book is a collection of addresses given at the Charles A. Fisher Memorial Institute on Aging. The chapters are very readable and contain a wealth of information. The concepts of aging, religion, employment, economic problems, mental hygiene, and the like are considered from the standpoint of the older person. It is not just a book for old persons, since "aging creatively" is a lifelong process.

LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

Marriage Today, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42d St., New York 36. (22 min, BW, sd.)

Deals with ideals and goals of adult love. Shows that conflicts are bound to occur in marriage but that they can be resolved by people who develop perspective and who are willing to work together.

New Frontiers of Medicine, March of Time, 369 Lexington Ave., New York 17. (17 min, BW, sd.)

This shows some of the remarkable developments of modern medicine. The need for an intelligent view of such diseases as cancer, poliomyelitis, and heart disease, whose causes are not entirely known, is presented.

Power of God, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, 3558 South Jefferson, St. Louis, Mo. (56 min, BW, sd.)

Shows how the problems of modern life can be solved by the word of God spoken at the right time by plain Christians.

What's on Your Mind?, National Film Board of Canada, 1270 Avenue of the Americas, New York 20 (11 min, BW, sd.)

Indicates some of the ill-effects of today's problems on the mental health of individuals. Describes progress scientists are making in treatment of mental and emotional disorders, and debunks a few of the current fads and quack practices.

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